

X *From 9 Grants*
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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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THIS is the 157th issue of this little bulletin. With it we begin the fourteenth volume, which should contain many more important and interesting items than were made available during the last few years. The major domestic companies are getting into their stride and seem to be anxious to add worth while items to their catalogs that are not presently available. Shipments from abroad are arriving more regularly and contain some highly interesting recordings. The smaller independent companies are offering unusual selections that it would not pay the larger companies to issue. All in all, it looks as if the next year will be an outstanding one for record collectors.

We hope to be able to bring to the attention of our readers all of the domestic releases that we think will be of interest to them, and most of the important recordings that are issued abroad. It looks like a big job but a mighty rewarding one, for in all probability our fourteenth volume will contain more interesting items than any of its predecessors.

During the last month we advertised THE NEW RECORDS in several of the leading newspapers throughout the country including *The New York Times*, *The Chicago Tribune* and *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. Hundreds of new subscribers were secured by this means and we take this opportunity of welcoming them with the hope that they will continue to find our little bulletin of value. More persons are now reading THE NEW RECORDS than at any time during its long history.

Last month we included a renewal blank with each copy mailed, and so many renewals were received that it has been impossible for us to check our mailing list. We are, therefore, carrying over all of our subscribers, whether they renewed or not. We cannot continue this prac-

tice beyond this month, so if you have not as yet sent in your renewal, you should do so at once in order that you will not miss any issues.

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Composer and Critic. By Max Graf. 331 pp.
W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York).
Price \$3.75.

The subtitle of Mr. Graf's book is "Two Hundred Years of Musical Criticism." It is the first book on the subject that we believe was written with the general reader in mind. It traces the history of musical criticism from its beginning in the middle of the 18th century until the present time. It, however, omits comment on those critics who are actively engaged in their profession today. Johann Mattheson, one of the leading musical personalities of the first half of the 18th century, begins the procession, which includes most of the important writers on the subject on both sides of the Atlantic.

It is interesting to note how closely these critics were tied in with the development of musical ideas throughout the years. In reading of them and following their careers, one unconsciously gains a very good picture of the musical progress that has been made during the last two centuries. The subject may not at once appeal to a great number of music lovers, but after a perusal of Mr. Graf's excellent volume, they will find that it is pregnant with much interesting and illuminating matter that is vital to a fuller understanding of great music, practically all of which was written during the period covered by this unique book.

Max Graf was for many years one of the leading music critics of Vienna, when that city was the musical capital of the world. He recalls in this volume many colorful reminiscences of his associations with Brahms, Bruckner, Hugo

Wolf and other outstanding personalities of that golden age, so rich in musical development. Mr. Graf, now resident in the United States, has gained great facility in writing witty, sincere, and extremely clear English. One never has to guess what Mr. Graf really means—it is all very evident. We spent several very pleasant hours with *Composer and Critic*, and gained much valued information.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE. All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive* of excise tax. In ordering please add 5 per cent to list prices quoted.

ORCHESTRA



Berlioz: *Symphonie Fantastique*, Op. 14. San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 6–12" discs in album. Victor Set M-994. \$6.50.

Here is a performance many have been undoubtedly long waited for—Pierre Monteux conducting the *Symphonie Fantastique*. Other conductors have recorded the work, among them Bruno Walter and, as recently as March 1942, Artur Rodzinsky, but somehow one instinctively knows that it is Pierre Monteux who is the conductor for Berlioz' great and daring composition. It is the type of music in which he reigns supreme and uncontested today.

The music of Berlioz has been strangely neglected in America. Full recognition for the extraordinary qualities of his genius has not even to this date been a general point-of-view. Of course, Berlioz, like Mahler, has his adherents, but his compositions, which rank so high in popularity and critical opinion in Europe, have not enjoyed the same exalted position over here, where the cult of German symphonic music is apt to admit little else. And yet, there are eminent musicians and conductors who insist that Berlioz is "The greatest romantic of them all."

Berlioz is indeed a wild and uncontrollable figure in the world of music. He might have burst forth from the eerie pages of an Emily Brontë novel. His invention is daring and original—startlingly original for the period in which he lived. Here was a composer who took chances and kicked over the conventions, unlike Brahms who with sober dignity stuck to the great model of a framework provided by Beethoven. Berlioz was oblivious to the reactions of his public; to express himself as he felt he must was a necessity.

The *Symphonie Fantastique* is divided into several sections: *Dreams*; *Passions*; *A Ball*; *Scenes in the Country*; *March to the Scaffold*; *Dream of the*

Witches' Sabbath. This musical panorama gives Berlioz wide latitude to express himself.

Mr. Monteux and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra give a magistral reading of this imposing score. Without further ado, we do not hesitate to say that this is and probably will be for many years to come the definitive performance of the *Symphonie Fantastique*.

The recording is A-1. We are also very happy to note that surfaces have suddenly greatly improved and that surface noise has been much reduced in the last month or so. It is to be supposed that RCA Victor is using far better materials in its making of records.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Bizet: *Symphony in C major*. Seven sides, and **Bizet: *Carmen***—Entr'acte (Prelude to Act III). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinsky. 4–12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-596. \$4.50.

This is the astounding work of a boy of 17, for that was all the future composer of *Carmen* could lay claim to when he wrote his one and only symphony. In fact, so great was Bizet's subsequent success as an operatic composer, that it is hard to think of him even dabbling in the symphonic forms.

However, this is indeed a very charming work, put together and orchestrated with a maturity which is altogether astounding. It is naturally derivative and owes many of its passages and effects to widely divergent sources. In the first movement *Allegro vivo* we hear strong echoes of Beethoven, especially the early Beethoven. Later we have suggestions of Rossini and of Mozart. The second movement *Adagio* with its languorous and exotic oboe solo, which forms the main theme of the movement, sounds more like the composer of *Carmen* and *Les Pecheurs de Perles*, in fact, it is quite original, perfect in form and movement, altogether charming to listen to. Again in the middle section of the third movement, *Allegro vivace*, there is music which foreshadows the sun-splashed music of the arena.

Artur Rodzinsky and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony play this virtually unknown work with a proper enthusiasm and with a feeling for its delicate and fastidious scoring. The oboe solo of the second movement is accomplished with great steadiness and clarity by Harold Gomberg.

The history of this symphony is interesting and not a little fascinating. Bizet wrote it in 1855. The shadows of oblivion then covered the work until it was unburied and published in September, 1935! It had its world-premiere under the baton of the late Dr. Felix Weingartner on February 26, 1935, at Basel!

There is a previous recording of this work made shortly after the world-premiere for His Master's Voice by Walter Goehr and the London-Philharmonic, but the present set entirely eclipses it, for it

is an unusually well-balanced, clear recording, with the added blessing of practically noiseless surfaces. On the odd side of the last record Mr. Rodzinsky and his men give a lovely account of the Prelude to the third act of *Carmen*.

And so once again we thank Columbia for straying far from the beaten track and making possible such a fine recording of a work which is not only something to arouse one's curiosity and interest, but also a work which can charm.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F, Op. 68. ("Pastoral"). New York Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 5-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1032. \$5.50.

And now here comes Leopold Stokowski with his version of The Pastoral Symphony—and it is an excellent one. Mr. Stokowski leads the New York City Symphony in an unusually convincing account of Beethoven's immortal score.

So much has been said about this work, that it hardly seems the moment for us to attempt to give a new evaluation of its intricate loveliness, its masterly architecture. Mr. Stokowski's reading is quite individual. Comparing it to Toscanini's version with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Stokowski accomplishes the first movement on two record sides, while Toscanini employs three. The reverse occurs in the lovely lyric second movement, *Scene by the Brookside*, for here Stokowski uses four record sides to Toscanini's three. The difference between these two interpretations is most marked here. Stokowski takes this movement at an unusually slow tempo. This seems quite logical, for the subject matter and atmosphere would indicate a languorous introspection on the part of the composer. Toscanini's unusually brisk treatment of the *Brook* movement would hardly indicate a lazy afternoon spent lying down beside the murmuring water. Stokowski's treatment would. Just where these great conductors obtain their authority for such widely divergent interpretations would be a very interesting matter for speculation and discussion.

In the present recording an admirable balance is obtained, and that shallow, brash quality that was once a feature of many albums is most happily absent. Here you will find plenty of bass to balance the soaring of the strings. It is obvious that Stokowski has put the New York City Symphony through its paces, for it sounds unusually responsive and well disciplined. The surfaces of these records are noticeably—and when we say noticeably, we mean noticeably—better than the material that RCA Victor has been using recently. Let us hope this will mean a now steady improvement in this direction, for there was need of it.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 36. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-597. \$4.50.

It has been over six years since the recordings of this work by the Boston Symphony under Koussevitzky, and the London Symphony conducted by Weingartner, were issued. Both were released within a few months of each other. At that time, the purists preferred Weingartner and those who did not care too much about tradition liked the more sparkling Koussevitzky version. And now, Fritz Reiner marches the very well-regarded Pittsburgh Symphony right down the middle of the road between London and Boston, with the feather of the best of modern reproduction prominently stuck in his cap. Our opinion is that he is very likely to draw admirers from both sides of the road.

Offenbach: La Belle Hélène—Overture. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-11-9026). \$1.

This is the first domestic recording of this attractive overture, at least, we do not remember it having been recorded in this country before; it is not listed in any of the present catalogs. It may sound a bit familiar to ballet fans for the waltz from it is included in the popular ballet *Gaite Parisienne*.

The Boston "Pops", as usual, gives a spirited performance in the best of taste. The reproduction is highly satisfactory.

Beethoven: Coriolan Overture, Op. 62. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (V-11-9023). \$1.

Numerous recordings of this piece have been issued before—the two outstanding ones were by the London Symphony under Bruno Walter and Mitropoulos' version with the Minneapolis Symphony. Toscanini now offers his performance, which rather puts all of the others in the shade. The great maestro is supreme in selections of this type and in our opinion unbeatable.

Borodin: Prince Igor—Polovtsian Dances. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-12269-D). \$1.

Maybe we are not in the mood for the *Polovtsian Dances* this afternoon, for Ormandy's performance seemed to us to be rather a perfunctory one. We couldn't get a bit excited about it. In checking over the other available recordings of this music, we find that the present one has little competition, and so, if you feel a desire to add it to your library this is it.

Herold: Zampa—Overture. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Efreim Kurtz. 1-12" disc (C-12270-D). \$1.

This is a bang-up good overture, full of spirit and many tantalizing melodies. Efreim Kurtz presents it on this disc in a most pleasing fashion, and we rather believe most persons will like it immensely.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto No. 1 in C, Op. 15. Ania Dorfmann (piano) and NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1036. \$4.50.

Here is a truly fine recording of one of Beethoven's less often played piano concertos. Arturo Toscanini and Ania Dorfmann are the artists, complementing each other in a most impressive way to evolve an album which is both homogenous and highly sympathetic.

Beethoven's first concerto is not apt to be heard as frequently as the 4th, 5th (the "Emperor"), or even the 3d. Nevertheless it is a noble and beautiful work with all the marks of genius characteristic of the Titan's music. Beethoven himself performed the work on March 29, 1795. He was young at the time and uncertain as to the worth of many of his early endeavors, for, in a critical appraisal of his B-flat and C. Major concertos, he says that neither of them are "among my best in kind." It would be indeed idle to try and claim that the present concerto is of comparable magnitude with the later works in this form, but we can only add that we would be very happy if our young men today could write a first piano concerto such as Beethoven's.

The opening movement is full of fire and style and life; the second is charming and quaint, though lacking, very naturally, the depth, resignation and sweetness of some of the composer's later slow movements. The finale *Allegro scherzando* begins with a brilliant piano solo which is soon joined by the full orchestra in one of Beethoven's characteristic rollicking final movements.

We hear that this set was made during an actual performance. If that is so, all the drawbacks that generally mar and plague such recordings are most happily absent. This was not the case with the recently released Rubinstein-Toscanini recording of the Beethoven Concerto No. 3, which was in many ways tonally unsatisfactory. The reverse is true here, for the piano has been captured most faithfully and the orchestra has a roundness and spaciousness which are highly desirable.

Toscanini and Miss Dorfmann seem to be in full rapport and they combine their talents thrillingly to product a charming addition to any collection.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 2 in G, Op. 44. Benno Moiseiwitsch (piano) and Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. 4-12" discs (V-C-3410 to V-C-3413) in album. Also available in automatic sequence (V-C-7607 to V-C-7610). \$7.60.

Ever since this recording was released in England over a year ago, music lovers on this side of the

Atlantic have been most anxious to hear it. Comparatively few persons have heard this concerto—it is seldom played, and as far as we know it has never been recorded before. To most record collectors this is a new work by Tchaikovsky—a composer who has been dead for half a century. Quite exciting, isn't it?

It was written during several years prior to 1882 and was first performed in that year at the Moscow Exposition of Industrial Arts. Anton Rubinstein conducted the orchestra and Taneyev was the pianist. It was greeted with wild acclaim but it is pretty generally conceded that the applause was for the performers and the composer rather than for the composition itself. Its life in the concert hall was a short one and except for very occasional performances, it has disappeared from concert programs entirely. There are several reasons for this. In the first place the piano part is most difficult, and most pianists do not think that it is worthy of the great effort required to learn and properly play it. It seems to start nowhere and ramble along without any definite destination until it finally comes to the end. It has plenty of Tchaikovskyan color and abounds in pleasing melodies. There is a long cadenza for the pianist in the first movement; there are long and important passages for solo violin and violoncello in the second movement; the finale contains a lot of lively tunes *allegro con fuoco*. In fact it seems to have too much of everything. Critics may say what they please but they cannot accuse this concerto of being dull. It has been called a symphony with piano obbligato, and it has been termed a triple concerto for piano, violin and cello, but it has never been called dull.

Moiseiwitsch does a bang-up job and has reasonably good orchestral co-operation in this recording. He must have thought it was worth the effort and he is due a vote of thanks for making it possible for so many of us to hear this unusual concerto, for without his aid, it would still be an unknown major work in the list of Tchaikovsky's compositions, to most of us. We had a mighty good time playing these four discs; we hope you'll enjoy them if you think they are worth the price.

R.

CHAMBER MUSIC



White: Sea Chanty. Edna Phillips (harp) with string ensemble under the direction of Eugene Ormandy. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-259. \$2.50.

Edna Phillips is the very talented first harpist of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Her husband, Samuel R. Rosenbaum, comissioned Paul White to compose the *Sea Chanty* for her. The work was completed and its world-premiere took place, naturally with Miss Phillips as the soloist, at Rochester in March 1942, with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Jose Iturbi conducting.

Mr. White went to genuine folk-tune sources for

his thematic material. Three of the chanties popular among American sailors of a pioneer era are: *Blow the Man Down*; *Tommy's Gone to Hilo*; and *O Wake Her and Shake Her!* The composer, who is an associate conductor of the Rochester Civic Orchestra, is a man whose American background is apparent in his music. He was, therefore, signally well equipped for the job of writing the *Sea Chanty*.

The composition is hardly great music, but it is distinctive and most agreeable, scored with a hand which is deft and directed by good taste. Particularly charming and nostalgic is the second movement—*Andante espressivo*.

Miss Phillips, Carlos Salzedo's most brilliant pupil, clearly demonstrates her mastery of her instrument. Her playing is at all times clear and beautiful. A quintet of strings, under the direction of Eugene Ormandy, includes Alexander Hilsberg, Samuel Mayes and Anton Torello, first violinist, 'cellist and bass of the Philadelphia Orchestra. The recording is admirable. D.

Bach: Sonata No. 3 in E major (for Harpsichord Concertante and Violin Solo). Wanda Landowska (harpsichord) and Yehudi Menuhin (violin). 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1035. \$3.50.

Lovers of the immortal Bach, who find his music most satisfactorily performed when it is played on the instruments for which it was written, will rejoice on hearing this fine recorded version by Landowska and Menuhin. The present sonata is the third in a set of six, which Bach wrote during the happy days at Cothen, when he was kapellmeister of the orchestra at the court of Prince Leopold. It is gay and pleasing music that anyone may enjoy who has any taste for music of this period. So many persons take Bach's music so seriously that they fail to enjoy the gaiety and light-heartedness that is present in much of it—especially in works like the one under consideration. The people of Bach's time didn't spend all of their time in churches; they had good times the same as we do and they enjoyed music with a bit of spirit and zip to it. The present recording should convince us of that fact, if we need convincing.

The artists who have made this recording are certainly at the top of their profession and they give us just the sort of performance that we would expect from musicians of that calibre. The reproduction is of the best. R.

CHORAL



Adams: The Bells of St. Mary's (from the RKO film "The Bells of St. Mary's"). One side, and **Malotte: The Lord's Prayer**. Victor Chorale with orchestra conducted by Robert Shaw. 1-12" disc (V-11-9155). \$1.

We haven't seen the film but if *The Bells of St. Mary's* is sung half as well in the picture as it is on

this disc, it would be well worth going to see just for this one feature. The brilliant young choral conductor, Robert Shaw, really did himself proud with this one. The ever-popular Malotte's *The Lord's Prayer* receives reverential treatment, and is a very suitable piece for the reverse side of this outstanding choral record. Excellent reproduction is an added feature.

Elgar: Dream of Gerontius, Op. 38. Heddle Nash (tenor), Dennis Noble (baritone), Gladys Ripley (mezzo-soprano), Norman Walker (bass), and Huddersfield Choral Society (chorus master: Herbert Bardgett) with Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent. 12-12" discs (V-C-3435 to V-C-3446) in album. Also available in automatic sequence (V-C-7611 to V-C-7622). \$22.80.

Recently there arrived from England this marvelous recording of Elgar's masterpiece—a choral work that has been crying for a recording since the earliest days of the phonograph. It remained for H.M.V., with the aid of the British Council, to make it available for the music lovers of the world.

The Dream of Gerontius, Elgar's musical setting of Cardinal Newman's poem of the same name, was in the mind of the composer for a decade before it was finally written and given its first performance at the Birmingham Festival on 3 October 1900. Richter, the great Wagnerian conductor, directed, and the performance was not in any way a success. Both the singers and the conductor seemed not to grasp the subtle combination of voices and orchestra. Two years later, however, the text was translated into German and a performance was given at the Lower Rhine Festival at Düsseldorf. Julius Butts, who had made the translation, conducted, and the performance was an outstanding success. *The Dream of Gerontius* was acclaimed by both music lovers and critics. Richard Strauss was most enthusiastic, and at a luncheon given for the composer, he raised his glass and said, "I drink to the success and welfare of the first English progressive musician, Meister Elgar."

The following year a most successful performance was given in Westminster Cathedral, and from then on it has been the highlight on many musical festivals all over the world. The first American performance was given by the Apollo Club of Chicago in 1903.

Most persons think of *The Dream of Gerontius* as a sacred cantata, although its title page is not so marked. Elgar did not so consider it. A. R. writing in *The Gramophone* (London) states that the composer thought of it "as a musical representation of the culminating drama of every human soul." He quotes Elgar as saying with some vigor: "Look here, I imagined Gerontius to be a man like us. Not a priest, or saint, but a sinner, a repentant one, of course, but still no end of a wordly man in his life, but now brought to book. Therefore I've not filled his part with church tunes and rubbish, but a good, healthy,

full-blooded romantic, remembered worldliness, so to speak. It is, I imagine, much more difficult to tear oneself away from a well-to-do world than from a cloister."

For a fuller enjoyment of this outstanding recording, we suggest that a vocal score be secured, and that one familiarize himself with Cardinal Newman's text, and then follow the records with the score. There is no better way for one, who is not familiar with this work, to come to a quick appreciation of this musical drama.

Naturally in a performance of such length it is possible to pick out parts here and there that are not as nearly perfect as one might wish, but, as we consider the whole rendition, we cannot help giving it very high praise. The soloists are capable and they seem to be giving their very best to this recording. The chorus is excellent and the balance between the solo voices, chorus, and orchestra show careful rehearsing and meticulous direction. Will Mr. Bardgett, the chorus master, and Dr. Sargent, please take a bow?

Add to what we have written the fact that the H.M.V. technicians have produced one of the best recordings of its kind that we have ever heard. It must have been a very difficult job, and we are happy to report that it has been extremely well done.

R.

VOCAL



Album of Memories. Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano) with orchestra conducted by Jay Blackton. 2-10" discs in folder. Victor Set SP-7. \$1.75.

V-10-1138 *Mother Machree*.

Love Me and the World is Mine.

V-10-1139 *Dear Little Boy of Mine.*

I'll Forget You.

Four songs by Ernest R. Ball are unpretentiously served up this month in a ten-inch folder, attractively sung (and not crooned) by Blanche Thebom.

While this is not great music or even very good music, Ernest R. Ball is a real part of the American musical scene, even today. His *When Irish Eyes Are Smiling* (not present in this album) and *Mother Machree* are best-sellers and have become as familiar to the average American as *coca-cola* or Joe di Maggio.

Three of these songs will be represented for the first time in many years in record catalogs. They are: *Love Me and the World is Mine*; *Dear Little Boy of Mine*, and *I'll Forget You*. It is particularly gratifying to have a current recording of *Love Me and the World is Mine*, for this song, written in 1906, was the hit of its day and it is interesting to learn what our parents and grandparents considered a song of the moment, a tune to hum while shaving or in the bathtub. *Dear Little Boy of Mine* (copyright 1918) can still conjure up memories for those of us who remember World War I.

Miss Thebom sings these songs with great sincerity and does not fall into the trap of trying to change her style and manner of singing when tackling music of a different kind. She is least successful in *Mother Machree*, for here we have vivid memories of John McCormack, Chauncey Olcott and, today, John Feeney. In other words, *Mother Machree* needs a tenor and a true son of Ireland at that; nothing else will really do. In the other three selections, Miss Thebom's warm voice and expressive style are quite delightful.

Jay Blackton conducts an orchestra for Miss Thebom without too many self-conscious frills and effects, which is just as well. We do, however, take exception to the utterly absurd over-amplification of these records. These are intimate, about-the-fireplace type of songs, RCA Victor,—not Strauss' *Elektra*!

MAX de SCHAUSENSEE.

In Old Vienna (Strauss Waltzes). Miliza Korjus (soprano) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Giuseppe Bamboschek. 2-12" discs in folder. Victor Set SP-15. \$2.25.

V-11-9063 *On the Beautiful Blue Danube.*
Emperor Waltz.

V-11-9064 *One Thousand and One Nights.*
Wine, Woman and Song.

In a lilac folder, on which appears the title *In Old Vienna*, are four of Johann Strauss, Jr.'s waltzes sung by Miliza Korjus. We seem to be always perpetrating something in the name of old Vienna, but your reviewer felt there was little in common between the giddy life of that once gay capital and the meaningless and incessant chirping of Mme. Korjus.

True enough, we here have four of the Waltz King's most beloved creations—*The Beautiful Blue Danube*, the *Emperor Waltz*, *A Thousand and One Nights* and *Wine, Woman and Song*,—but these are so contrived as to form merely the background for the singer who is constantly weaving rapid staccato embroideries up and down the scale and uttering meaningless *la, la la's*. Personally, we prefer our waltzes straight.

Mme. Korjus is present with all her faults and all her virtues. Here is a deadly accurate, glittering kind of vocalization, metronomically perfect and of unfailing flexibility, but it also makes for equally deadly monotony in music of this type. Any sustained note above G lacks requisite vibration and the tone becomes straight and hard. As she ascends the scale this fault is accentuated and when the singer reaches high D and E (as she does in these numbers), she surely evokes the noonday whistle.

The orchestra, under the excellent direction of the experienced Giuseppe Bamboschek, gets little chance to reveal itself, as the singer is, naturally, featured.

MAX de SCHAUSENSEE.

Bernstein: On the Town—Selections. Nancy Walker, Betty Comden, Adolph Green, Mary Martin and Lyn Murray Chorus and Orchestra. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-416. \$2.75.

Decca has recorded the more important tunes from Leonard Bernstein's Broadway hit "On the Town." This little album makes a fine souvenir of the performance for it includes three of the leading players of the original production—Nancy Walker, Betty Comden and Adolph Green. To this trio is added Mary Martin, whose Decca album of songs from "One Touch of Venus," in which she starred on the stage, is remembered with much delight.

In the present album, Miss Martin sings *Lucky To Be Me* and *Lonely Town*; Nancy Walker sings *I Can Cook Too* and *Ya Got Me*; Betty Comden and Adolph Green are heard in the duet *I Get Carried Away*; and the Lyn Murray Chorus gives a stirring performance of *I Feel Like I'm Not Out Of Bed Yet* and *New York, New York*. Decca supplies an attractive booklet with this set which gives the story of the play and the words of each of the songs.

It is pretty hard to believe that this gay and up-to-the-minute music was composed by the same person whose "Jeremiah" symphony was recorded by the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and released by Victor early this year. Mr. Bernstein is certainly a very versatile musician—a composer in many fields, a brilliant orchestral director, and an accomplished player of boogie-woogie. It would almost seem that this young man is blessed with too many talents.

R.

The Bells of St. Mary's. Bing Crosby with John Scott Trotter and his Orchestra. 2-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-410. \$1.50.

It looks as though Bing Crosby has another smash hit in his new picture "The Bells of St. Mary's." Decca, always alert to such opportunities, has just released this little album containing three selections from the movie and the ever-popular *I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen*. The songs from the picture are: *Aren't You Glad You're You?*; *In the Land of Beginning Again*; and *The Bells of St. Mary's*.

Bing sings these numbers in his usual ingratiating manner and his fans are going to like this album a lot, we are sure. It is a mighty attractive little souvenir of the picture, which according to reports, many persons are going to see several times.

Kreisler: The Old Refrain. One side, and **Danny Boy.** Nelson Eddy (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 1-10" disc (C-4335-M). 75c.

Nelson Eddy sings these ever-popular ballads in a most sympathetic manner, and those who like such things will surely find this disc highly acceptable. Thank goodness he did not use the maudlin version of *The Old Refrain* that Grace Moore did a few months ago, for her recording of this piece for Victor,

with its series of lines ending in refrain, rain, remain, plain, pain, pane, explain, gain, obtain *ad nauseam*.

Herbert: Thine Alone (from "Eileen"). One side, and **Youmans: Through the Years.** Igor Gorin (baritone) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 1-10" disc (V-10-1201). 75c.

Mr. Gorin's operatic renditions in the grand manner make these simple little songs sound much more profound than they really are. Recording—excellent.

PIANO



Beethoven: Sonata in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata"). Five sides and **Beethoven: Minuetto** (from Sonata in E flat, Op. 31, No. 3). Artur Schnabel (piano). 3-12" disc in album. Victor Set V-3. \$6.50.

Victor has chosen for its third album of Red Seal De Luxe records one of the better known Beethoven Piano Sonatas. Several versions of this work are already available, the most important were recorded by Artur Schnabel and Walter Gieseking. We still prefer the Schnabel interpretation to all of them including the present one. However, it is very likely that many music lovers will differ in their opinions, and it is entirely conceivable that a substantial number of them will choose the Rubinstein version. There is no question but that Rubinstein is one of the outstanding pianists of our day, and when it comes to playing Chopin, he is certainly hard to beat, but Beethoven is another matter. Our personal choice is either Schnabel, or, if a more romantic style is preferred, then Gieseking.

Our suggestion is to hear the several recordings available and then to make your own choice. Rubinstein has the large advantage of having his version pressed on the silent surface Red Seal De Luxe records, and in piano recordings that is a very real advantage.

Chopin Piano Music. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1034. \$3.50.

Horowitz, sensing the extreme present popularity of Chopin piano music, probably decided to ride in on this popular wave. He chose among other selections the "Polonaise," which is also offered as an individual disc this month. The other pieces in this album are the *Andante spianato* and *Grand Polonaise in E flat, Op. 22* and the *Waltz in A minor, Op. 34, No. 2* ("Valse Brillante").

All of these selections have been recorded before and are well known to lovers of piano music. It only remains for the individual to select the version that suits him best. However, we must point out that the piano reproduction in the present set is by all odds the best that we have ever heard. We noticed it the minute that the first disc began to play on our phono-

graph. We don't know whether it is just luck or whether Victor has some new trick it is using in making piano recordings. The marvelous reproduction is the distinctive feature of this set of discs.

Chopin: Polonaise in A flat, Op. 53, No. 6. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-9065). \$1.

If the companies issue one more recording of the Polonaise, we'll scream! Iturbi, who played it off-stage for the picture *A Song to Remember*, made a swell recording of it last summer, and collected immense royalties. We guess that Horowitz's manager felt that his man should collect a few dollars on this phenomenal hit and so insisted on Victor giving him a chance to record it. We can see no other reason. Horowitz certainly gives it the "works," and if you are not tired of this tune, you will probably get a thrill from the present version. It is splendidly recorded.

This disc is included in Horowitz's album (M-1034) of Chopin Piano Music which Victor is releasing this month.

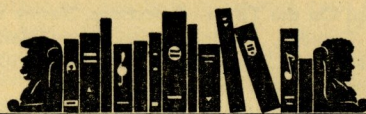
Liszt: La Campanella (No. 3 of "Grandes études de Paganini"). One side, and **Liszt: Valse impromptu in A flat.** Alexander Brailowsky (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-9025). \$1.

The old favorite *La Campanella* is imbued with new life in this sparkling performance by the brilliant pianist, Alexander Brailowsky. The *Liszt Valse impromptu in A flat* does not appear in the present domestic catalogs and is therefore particularly welcome. Brailowsky made a recording of this piece for Polydor many years ago but that is, of course, no longer available. The best of Victor's piano reproduction is in evidence on this disc.

VIOLONCELLO

Rachmaninoff: Danse Orientale, Op. 2, No. 2. One side, and **Grazioli: Adagio.** Edmund Kurtz (violin) with piano accompaniment by Emanuel Bay. 1-12" disc (V-11-9024). \$1.

Last October Victor released its first record by the celebrated Russian 'cellist Edmund Kurtz, and it met with the instant approval of music lovers everywhere. His selections for his first disc were excellent—Beethoven's *Sonatine* and Glazounoff's *Chant du ménestrel*. The little pieces that he has chosen for his second record are equally interesting, and we are sure that they will be very welcome to his many admirers in this country. They have been beautifully performed and faithfully recorded.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents. Edited by Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel. Illustrated. 431 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$6.

Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death. By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

The Musical Scene. By Virgil Thomson. x + 301 + xv pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

Evenings With Music. By Syd Skolsky. 382 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co. (New York). Price \$3.

Adventures in Symphonic Music. By Edward Downes. Decorations by John O'Hara Cosgrave, II. 323 pp. Farrar & Rinehart (New York). Price \$2.50.

Florestan: The Life and Work of Robert Schumann. By Robert Haven Schauffler. xiv, 574 pp. Illustrated. Henry Holt & Co. (New York). Price \$3.75.

This Modern Music. By John Tasker Howard. 234 pp. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. (New York). Price, \$2.50.

Bad Boy of Music. By George Antheil. 378 pp. Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibleone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musiercraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okoh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, and V—Victor.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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Duke Ellington. By Barry Ulanov. 322 pp. Illustrated. Creative Age Press, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.

In the June 1932 issue of *Disques*, the magazine which our older readers will remember as the forerunner of THE NEW RECORDS, we published one of the first articles to appear in print on Duke Ellington. It was entitled *Black Beauty*, and was written by R. D. Darrell, who later compiled the first edition of *The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music*. In his article Mr. Darrell predicted a future for the great Duke, which he has very largely achieved.

In view of our interest in Duke Ellington, over a long period of years, we were very anxious to investigate Mr. Ulanov's biography. We found it to be a "blow-for-blow" account of his eventful life, from his boyhood in Washington, D. C. to his present affluent position in Harlem today. It will be of particular interest to collectors of his records, for in addition to the discography listing supposedly every record he ever made, Mr. Ulanov has been meticulous in mentioning, often with a few pertinent remarks, all of the important musicians that have played with the Duke in his various bands. The copious index lists dozens of them. One might very well say that Mr. Ulanov has built his biography of Duke Ellington upon the history of his bands.

Mr. Ulanov stresses the vexing problems and difficulties that the Duke has faced in his career as a professional musician because of his race, but the record industry can view these prejudices with a clear conscience. Certainly it has never drawn any color line, and surely Negro musicians have been given every opportunity and encouragement. The record industry has been of inestimable value in helping such artists as Louis Armstrong, Marian Anderson, Paul

Robeson, Dorothy Maynor and a great host of others to their rightful place among the great musical personages of their day.

Barry Ulanov assumes his task well equipped. He is the editor of *Metronome*, one of the most influential magazines in the field of popular music, and is considered an authority on jazz music. His articles on this subject have appeared in *American Mercury*, *The New Leader*, *Esquire* and other magazines.

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Since the last issue of THE NEW RECORDS, prices have advanced on all Victor and Columbia Album Sets. The price of 10-inch album sets has increased 25c and the price of 12-inch sets 35c. For example, an album containing 4 10-inch 50c records formerly sold for \$2.50 (\$2 for the four records and 50c additional for the album) now such a set sells for \$2.75 (\$2 for the records and 75c for the album), or an album containing 4 12-inch \$1 records formerly sold for \$4.50, now the price is \$4.85 (\$4 for the records and 85c for the album.) In other words, to compute the present prices of Victor and Columbia Album Sets, add to the price of the records 75c for a 10-inch album and 85c for a 12-inch album.

* * *

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE. All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive* of excise tax. In ordering please add 5% to list prices quoted.

ORCHESTRA



Stravinsky: *The Song of the Nightingale*. Five sides, and **Chabrier:** *Joyous March*. Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1041. \$3.85.

During the year 1909, Stravinsky began to work on an opera in three acts called *Le Rossignol*, which he finally completed in 1914. It was produced on May 26 at the Paris Opera with Pierre Monteux conducting. The opera was presented for the first time in America at the Metropolitan with Marion Talley, Adamo Didur and Ralph Errolle, under the baton of Tullio Serafin on March 7, 1926.

It was from this opera, at the request of Diaghileff, Stravinsky fashioned the Symphonic Poem *Le Chant du Rossignol*, with which we are immediately concerned. It was performed for the first time as an orchestral suite in Geneva, Switzerland on December 6, 1919; and on February 2, 1920, Diaghileff produced it for the first time as a ballet.

Taken from a fairy story by Hans Christian Andersen, *Le Chant du Rossignol* (*The Song of the Nightingale*) has its action in China a thousand years ago in the magnificent palace of the Emperor. The story tells of the little grey nightingale who sang the most beautiful music in all the world. The little bird was replaced by a magnificent and bejeweled mechanical nightingale. The Emperor and his court were at first charmed, but they soon grew weary of so much mechanical perfection. The Emperor fell ill, and it was only on the return of the living bird and its liquid music that the monarch recovered from the shadow of death which had hung over him.

The present album offers the music as a purely orchestral piece. It is often reminiscent of both *The Firebird* and *Petrouchka* in its exotic flavor, in its delicate *orientalism*, in its staccato rhythms. For one listener, the composition proved tedious as a piece of sustained music, and seemed to cry for the visual investiture with which it was originally associated. Nevertheless, it will prove interesting to students of Stravinsky's music, and there are many charming and arresting moments.

There are no other recordings extant of *Le Chant du Rossignol*, and from this point-of-view, Victor has done record collectors a distinct service.

Eugene Goossens and the Cincinnati Symphony come through with flying colors, and the recording is a model of clarity and realistic projection. Some of the surfaces of this particular set seemed a little rough.

On the reverse of the last record is a fine account of Chabrier's vigorous *Joyous March*, a full-bodied and likeable four minutes of music.

D.

d'Indy: *Istar*—Symphonic Variations, Op. 42. Three sides, and **d'Indy:** *Fervaal*, Op. 40—Introduction to Act I. San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 2-12" discs in folder. Victor Set SP-16. \$2.25.

A modern recorded version of this work, which is often heard in the concert hall, has been needed for many years, and certainly a no more appropriate conductor than Monteux could have been selected for the task—a fellow Frenchman and a great admirer of César Franck's most famous pupil.

Dating from 1896, *Istar* deals with the legend of the goddess of that name and her search for her lover in the "Land of No Return." In order to portray Istar's descent into the lower world, where she leaves a garment or ornament at each of seven gates, d'Indy employs the variations form but reverses the usual procedure, his variations proceeding from the complex to the simple. The work is handled in a masterly manner and has considerable power and interest.

The last side of this pair of discs contains a sympathetic performance of the Introduction to Act I of d'Indy's opera *Fervaal*, which was produced in Brussels in 1897. It fits in very nicely with the main work of these discs.

Both selections have been most faithfully recorded.

Wagner: *Rienzi*—Overture. Three sides, and **Mendelssohn:** *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—Scherzo. The Hallé Orchestra conducted by John Barbirolli. 2-12" discs (V-C-3425 and V-C-3426). \$3.80.

It has been a long time since we have had a new recording of Wagner's *Rienzi Overture*. Old-timers will recall that it was one of the first electrical recordings to be made by the Philadelphia Orchestra, and that it was released about the time that the famous Orthophonic Victrola came upon the market. Everyone who purchased one of these marvelous instruments always got a copy of that recording and used it to demonstrate his new Victrola. We heard it so many times during that period that we thought that we would never want to hear it again. However, that has been many years ago, and so when we listened to the present version, it all seemed quite fresh and new to us. The bombastic music of the young Wagner gave us quite a thrill. Barbirolli gives it a spirited performance that should prove highly satisfying to most everyone. The reproduction achieved by the English recorders is well up to their usual very high standard.

We have heard better performances of the *Scherzo*—perhaps Barbirolli still had *Rienzi* running through his head when he recorded it.

R.

Grofé: Grand Canyon Suite. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1038. \$4.85.

What an unexpected combination!—Toscanini and Ferdie Grofé's *Grand Canyon Suite*! The *Maestro* has often been taken to task for not playing American music, and here he comes across with a surprising and superb job, for you may rest assured that Mr. Grofé's colorful composition has never sounded as well as this!

The *Grand Canyon Suite* is pure musical painting and pretends to be nothing more nor less. Mr. Grofé has carefully entitled his different sections so that no one will miss his intentions. He is not in the least preoccupied with the state of the soul or the reaction on the mind of the traveler who beholds the prehistoric grandeur of Nature's most extraordinary spectacle; nor is he concerned with the soul of America and our great continent as epitomized by the Canyon. Mr. Grofé's suite is a matter of orchestral color, and often it can be said that his musical palette is daubed with brilliant and sometimes effective paint. The composer is first and foremost a clever orchestrator rather than a man of musical ideas; this fact becomes more apparent with each record-side as one hears the album.

The *Grand Canyon Suite* was first performed on November 22, 1931, when it was presented by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra with Paul Whiteman as its conductor. Mr. Whiteman has recorded the suite for Victor, and Andre Kostelanetz followed with a recording for Columbia, but for sheer orchestral magnificence, both these earlier sets will have to take a back seat to the present stunning performance.

The suite is divided into five sections—*Sunrise*, *Painted Desert*, *On the Trail*, *Sunset* and *Cloud-burst*. This sonorous yet superficial musical canvas is in no sense great or profound music, yet its highly colored orchestration surely makes it part of the American musical scene.

Toscanini plays the suite with the same meticulous care and seriousness he would bring to a Schubert or Beethoven Symphony. The recording is a perfect example of present-day standards. The record surfaces are not as smooth as they might be.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Abreu: Tico Tico. One side, and **Romberg: The New Moon**—Softly as in a Morning Sunrise. Al Goodman and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-28-0403). 75c.

Al Goodman's versions of the popular *Tico Tico*, and the old Romberg favorite from "The New Moon" *Softly as in a Morning Sunrise*, make attractive fare for those who like a little light tuneful music once in a while. Splendidly recorded.

Prokofieff: Scythian Suite, Op. 20. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Désiré Defauw. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1040. \$3.85.

When we consider that Prokofieff wrote the *Scythian Suite* over thirty years ago, one can readily realize that he was well in advance of his time. It was first performed in Petrograd in 1916 with the composer conducting.

In this suite, Prokofieff attempts with rare success to depict the Scythians, a barbarous pagan race who roamed the steppes of southern Russia from the 8th to the 2nd century before Christ. They worshipped many wild gods and participated in weird ceremonies with their attending furious and exciting dances. Prokofieff has caught the spirit of these savage nomads and realistically portrays them in this lively work. The suite is composed of four sections bearing the following titles: *Adoration of Velëss and Ala*; *The Hostile-God and the Dance of the Dark Spirits*; *The Night*; and *Glorious Departure of Lolly and Cortege of the Sun*.

Just in passing, we might remark, that if you find Stravinsky's *Sacre du printemps* to your liking, you will more than likely find the *Scythian Suite* mighty attractive.

This is the first recording of this work, and Victor is due a word of praise for making this highly interesting composition available for the record-buying public. It has been given a brilliant and most satisfactory performance by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under the spirited direction of Désiré Defauw. Reproduction—excellent.

Rossini Overtures. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1037. \$4.85.

V-11-9066 *Barber of Seville*—Overture.

V-11-9067 *La Gazza Ladra*—Overture.

V-11-9068 *La Cenerentola*—Overture.

V-11-9069 *Il Signor Bruschino*—Overture.

William Tell—Passo a sie.

A couple of months ago Victor issued this set of discs using its new non-breakable material (Victor Set V-2). Now they are made available in the regular shellac pressings. We suppose that Victor is interested in noting how many persons in the future will feel that the new material is worth twice the price of the standard mixture. We could get ourselves into a long argument on this score but neither time nor space is available. Your dealer will have both sets in stock and so you may have the opportunity of making the test and coming to your own decision.

We might mention, however, that these Rossini Overtures have been brilliantly performed and splendidly recorded, and are well worth a place in any well-rounded record library.

Rachmaninoff: *The Isle of the Dead*, Op. 29. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-599. \$3.85.

In January of this year, Victor released its recording of *The Isle of the Dead* by the Boston Symphony under Koussevitzky and it received very high praise in these columns. This month Columbia issues its version by the Minneapolis Symphony with Mitropoulos conducting. We have played both sets over very carefully and have honestly tried to come to some decision as to their merits. We are ready to admit that Mitropoulos' slower tempo makes his version sound more impressive, but is his a really better reading? That is a question that might be argued at great length to no real advantage. It would seem to us that it is pretty much a matter of personal preference. Both Koussevitzky and Mitropoulos are highly sympathetic to the Rachmaninoff score, both are able musicians, and both have fine orchestras at their command, and thus we have two superb recordings from which we may choose. In this case, we feel that the better thing to do is to let our readers make their own choice.

Each company has done its best to achieve faithful reproduction and each has been successful to a marked degree. We rather feel that in making your choice you will consider primarily the difference in the reading of the conductors.

A detailed description of this well-beloved Rachmaninoff work may be found in the review of the Victor version in our January 1946 issue.

Handel—arr. Ormandy: *Concerto for Orchestra in D major*. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-12280-D). \$1.

As we finished listening to this disc, we looked around to see how many latecomers were finding their seats—for the moment we thought that we were in the Academy of Music at a Philadelphia Orchestra concert. Ormandy often uses just such a selection to open his programs—this particular arrangement of Handel's concerto has been used several times. It is an excellent appetizer and puts one in the mood to enjoy the larger works to come. It has been given a beautiful performance on this disc and the reproduction is satisfactory.

Addinsell: *Warsaw Concerto*. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (C-7443-M). \$1.

And now another recording of the *Warsaw Concerto*. Its popularity still seems to hold and so we suppose that a number of persons will be interested in this disc. It is the kind of music that movie audiences go for in a big way but one certainly tires of it after he has heard it a few times. Kostelanetz gives it a good whirl and the recording is top-notch.

Schubert: *Symphony No. 8 in B minor*. "Unfinished." Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1039. \$3.85.

With the possible exception of Beethoven's *Fifth*, no other symphony has received so much attention from the recorders as Schubert's *Unfinished*. We are familiar with nearly a dozen recordings of it. However, we have no quarrel with Victor for bringing out this new recording by the Boston Symphony to replace its earlier one. It is a masterpiece in every sense of the word. Koussevitzky gives a poetic reading that is truly entrancing, and the Victor recorders have done an outstanding job. The record surfaces are as smooth as glass—an important matter in works such as this with its many very quiet passages. Here is an album in which Victor may take proper pride.

Radio City Music Hall Souvenir Album. The Radio City Music Hall Orchestra, Soloists and Chorus conducted by Erno Rapee. 5-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-437. \$4.25.

Nearly every visitor to New York pays a visit to Radio City Music Hall, and many New Yorkers boast that they have not missed a production there since it was opened a number of years ago. Its orchestra, chorus and ballet are famous throughout the world. Decca has chosen for this album a number of selections which proved most popular with its audiences. Playing these discs will recall to many of us a very pleasant evening spent in the world's supreme music hall and movie palace.

The selections chosen are: *Orpheus in Hades Overture*; *Handel's Largo*; *Song of India*; *Tinkle Tot*; *Doll Dance*; *Dance of the Hours*; *Aragonaise*; *Hymn to the Sun*; *Parade of the Wooden Soldiers*; and *Play Gypsies, Dance Gypsies*.

Bath: *Cornish Rhapsody*. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hubert Bath with Harriet Cohen (piano). 1-12" disc (C-7440-M). \$1.

(This annotation is reprinted from the February 1946 issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

This rhapsody for piano and orchestra was featured in the English film "Love Story." It is movie music of the better quality and its haunting melodies invite repeated playings. If this is an example of the music that English composers are writing for the films, Hollywood might do well to import a few of them.

It is possible, however, that this music may sound better than it really is because of the splendid performance it is given by the distinguished pianist Harriet Cohen and the London Symphony conducted by the composer.

Strauss: Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28.

Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 2-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1029. \$2.85.

Victor has decided to re-press its first album of non-breakable records on the standard material. Those who did not care to pay \$4.50 for this item may now purchase it at the regular price of standard records. We presume that this will be Victor's policy from now on—all sets that are brought out in the De Luxe edition will also be made available in regular shellac pressings.

Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony have made a marvelous recording of this lively piece, as all persons know who heard the original De Luxe set when it was issued last September. If you haven't heard it, it is well worth investigating.

Gomez—arr. Jungnickel: II Guarany—Overture.

Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-11-9112). \$1.

We always associate this piece with Vessella's Band, which played for so many seasons at Atlantic City—the last time we heard it was when we were spending our vacation there many, many summers ago. It is grand music for an open air concert—not so subtle that it may be spoiled by the refreshment vendors hawking their wares.

The Boston "Pops" gives it a stirring performance, and the Victor recorders have spared no pains to make it sound most realistic.

Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a. (Simplified version). Decca Little Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alexander Smallens. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-408. \$2.

Decca may have intended this simplified version of the famous *Nutcracker Suite* for children, with the idea of interesting the young folks in light music of the better grade, but we warrant that a great many grown-ups are going to find it very pleasant listening. We can't imagine more delightful dinner music. Alexander Smallens is a conductor of ability and taste, and the present recording again demonstrates that fact.

Addinsell: Prelude and Waltz. (from the film "Blithe Spirit"). London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Muir Mathieson. 1-12" disc (C-7441-M). \$1.

There has been a consistent demand for more music by the composer of the ever-popular *Warsaw Concerto*. In response to this demand, Columbia offers this recording of Addinsell's *Prelude and Waltz* from his music for the film of Noel Coward's *Blithe Spirit*. It is definitely movie music of the better grade, and for those who can't quite go for music which they call "classical," it should prove mighty attractive. It has been given a splendid performance and has been faithfully recorded.

OPERA



Bizet: Carmen—Excerpts. Sung in French. Risé Stevens (mezzo-soprano), Raoul Jobin (tenor), Nadine Conner (soprano), Robert Weede (baritone) with the Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra conducted by George Sebastian. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-607. \$5.85.

It is too bad that Columbia couldn't have stretched a point and, already well armed with four principal singers, a good conductor, and the Metropolitan Opera chorus and orchestra, given us the complete *Carmen* which is so badly needed.

Carmen is such a masterpiece in its entirety; without one note too many or one dull or false passage, it should eventually rate an up-to-date and complete recording. Was this not perhaps the moment? With the example of Columbia's complete third act of *Walkure* still dangling before our eyes, it was to be fervently hoped, when rumors began to stir that a Columbia *Carmen* was in the offing, that it would prove a complete one. Unfortunately, the present album, despite some fine qualities, doesn't even suggest a performance in the way that Victor's record drama of Rossini's *Barbiere di Siviglia* did, for instance. The present set is merely a collection of the principal arias from the opera with the final duet thrown in for good measure. There are no connecting passages, no bits of "atmosphere"; there is no feeling of "theater," no sense of continuity of scene. The venture is completely lacking in imagination, and so was Columbia when it planned and recorded the album.

Having once and for all faced this fact and swallowed our disappointment, there is a good deal to enjoy in some of the performances of the singers.

Risé Stevens, though lacking the sultry and sensuous type of voice that best characterizes the Bizet-Mérimée heroine (such a voice as Bruna Castagna's, for instance), nevertheless gives an intelligent and interesting performance. Her singing is of good quality, her rhythm admirable, her sense of nuance and dramatic effect to be commended. The *Habanera* is Miss Stevens' finest achievement and immediately proclaims Carmen a sinuous, svelte and insinuating creature. The *Seguidille* and *Gypsy Song* make one feel that Carmen is working on all twelve cylinders to land Don Jose, but the singing is neat and contains no little fascination. The *Card Scene* lacks the potent drama of a great singing-actress, which Miss Stevens doesn't pretend to be, but she ends her work with an effective *Death Scene*, in which the tense realism of her singing stands out in strong contrast to the placid, uncommunicative Don Jose of Raoul Jobin.

Mr. Jobin, making his American record debut, gets away to an unimpressive start. Despite a smoothly sung *Flower Song*, he sounds little more than routine and his diction and style are undistinguished. The tenor has been heard to far better advantage in the Metropolitan on many occasions.

Nadine Conner, one of the most gifted of present-day American sopranos, has been called upon to sing Micaela's great aria of the third act. This is also a recording debut. Miss Conner's voice is pure, light and distinctly lyric in character. She has an excellent style for this music. Except for a rather ugly attack on the final high B-flat, Miss Conner makes a most agreeable impression, and it is to be hoped there will be subsequent recordings of her voice.

Robert Weede delivers the famous *Toreador Song* without exhausting its dramatic possibilities, but his singing is steady and of a pleasant and spirited quality. All this is just a little tantalizing, for there is no chance of knowing what he and Miss Conner and Mr. Jobin would do with the rest of their parts.

Orchestra and chorus are just adequate; sometimes they seem to fade thinly into the distance. A disturbing thinning out and blurring seemed to plague the last inch of surface on all these records, nor are these surfaces uniformly noiseless. George Sebastian reveals himself as an excellent conductor. And so, we conclude our little discourse with, "Better this than nothing at all" or some equally expressive sentiment.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Puccini: La Tosca—Vissi d'arte. Act II. One side, and **Puccini: Gianni Schicchi**—O mio babbino caro. Licia Albanese (soprano) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9115). \$1.

Beethoven: Fidelio—Abscheulicher wo eilst du Hin? Act I. Rose Bampton (soprano) with NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (V-11-9110). \$1.

Mozart: Die Zauberflöte—Ah, I feel to grief and sadness. (Pamina's Aria). Act II. Sung in English. One side, and **Mozart: Don Giovanni**—Batti, batti, o bel masetto. Act I. Sung in Italian. Eleanor Steber (soprano) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 1-12" disc (V-11-9114). \$1.

In this new batch of operatic records—sopranos in this case—Licia Albanese emerges as the most attractive and important addition to Victor's operatic personnel heard in a very long time. Miss Albanese has selected for her American recording debut the Puccini arias, *O mio babbino caro* from *Gianni Schicchi*, and the well-known *Vissi d'arte* from *Tosca*. The *Gianni Schicchi* aria, so charmingly melodious, has not been recorded in America since before 1920 when Frances Alda, Florence Easton

(the creator of the role) and Claudia Muzio all made recordings for various companies. Miss Albanese's tender voice is a combination of delicacy and intensity, which is rare, and her singing of these numbers, particularly the *Vissi d'arte*, is far from a mere succession of lovely tones. The singer has the happy faculty of making these operatic moments live and flame again for the listener. She herself is obviously convinced in what she is doing, and the result is that this is communicated vividly to the listener. Miss Albanese has a beautifully placed lyric voice, pulsating with life and emotion. We can unreservedly urge you all to listen to these her first American-made records.

Eleanor Steber adds *Batti, batti, o bel masetto* from *Don Giovanni* and *Pamina's Aria* from *The Magic Flute* to her already issued airs of the Countess from *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Miss Steber's dark, lyric voice is admirably suited to the *Magic Flute* excerpt, which she sings with fine musicianship. She does not altogether efface memories of other recorded performances of the aria. The singer's dark, emotional tone doesn't seem to be just the thing for *Zerlina's* coquetties, but her musicianly singing and her clean scale passages stand her in good stead.

Rose Bampton, aided by Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Symphony, gives a fine performance of Leonore's great scene—*Abscheulicher, wo eilst du Hin?* from Beethoven's *Fidelio*. The *Maestro's* orchestra blazes out the opening chords in thrilling manner, and Mme. Bampton quite companions him in the surge and impact of her recitative, though she never is quite able to sustain this tremendous level of tension as the air proceeds. The singer's voice is rather lyric for this music, which really calls for a voice molded in the heroic manner. However, she sings cleanly and with good style, and it is evident that she is a serious artist. Mr. Toscanini's portion of the scene is magnificently realized.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

CHORAL



Holst: The Hymn of Jesus. Huddersfield Choral Society with the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent. Chorus Master: H. Bardgett. 3-12" discs (V-C-3399 to V-CS-3401) in album. Also available in automatic sequence (V-CS-7604 to V-C-7606). \$5.70.

Gustav Holst (1874-1934) was undoubtedly a mystic and perhaps for that reason his works lying in that direction were not immediately appreciated by the music-loving public. One must be in the proper mood to understand and enjoy *The Planets* and the present *The Hymn of Jesus*. The words of the latter were translated from the Apocryphal Acts of St. John. It was written for two mixed choirs

and a semi-chorus of female voices with symphony orchestra. It consists of five parts: *Prelude; The Hymn—Glory to Thee; Divine Grace in Dancing; Divine ye in Dancing; and When I am gone.* In the *Prelude* Holst introduces two plainchant hymns *Vexilla regis* and *Pange lingua* sung by choirs, seemingly in the distance, as an introduction to *The Hymn*. This is most effective and tends to fit one emotionally for that which is to follow.

Holst said very little about his religious beliefs but it is known that the connection between dancing and mystic ritual appealed to him, and in translating *The Hymn of Jesus* he came to the words, "Ye who dance not, know not what we are knowing," and he took them as the text for his composition.

We are indebted to the British Council for making this splendid recording available, and it is a splendid recording. The choirs are excellent, and they have been very carefully rehearsed, and under the admirable direction of Mr. Bardgett give a performance that merits the highest praise. The Liverpool Philharmonic is entirely adequate and thus we have a set of discs that should fully meet the requirements of the most discerning.

R.



VOCAL

Lily Pons Waltz Album. Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestras conducted by Andre Kostelanetz and Maurice Abravanel. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-606. \$4.85.

And here is yet another Lily Pons album! This makes Mme. Pons' tenth album, and it is an attractive one. She is probably the most widely recorded vocal artist of the day. This latest set bears the title of *Waltz Album*, and, in fact, it contains seven waltzes, ranging from Bixio, Herbert and Noel Coward to Johann Strauss and Gounod.

All the delicacy of tone and vocal artistry that have won such a high position in the musical world for Mme. Pons are here present. *Kiss Me Again* from *Mlle. Modiste* by Victor Herbert is charmingly presented, while Bixio's *Tell Me that You Love Me To-Night* is another light number which the singer handles with her own particular individual touch. The two tuneful but fairly innocuous Noel Coward Waltzes receive as distinguished treatment as they are apt to be ever invested with.

The more important numbers such as the *Fledermaus* waltzes arranged by Frank La Forge and the waltz-arias from Gounod's *Romeo et Juliette* and *Mireille* are attractive additions to Mme. Pons' long list of operatic recordings. The *Fledermaus* is the most engaging number in the album. It is sung with an enchanting delicacy and with a tone whose fine-spun fragility is the essence of charm. The *roulades*

and the final F in *alt* are encompassed with ease as Julius Baker, on the flute, vies with the soprano in the elaborate cadenza.

The waltz from *Romeo* is Mme. Pons' least successful effort in the present set. Pitched up an entire tone, it is sung as though it had been written in sections and both singer and orchestra fail to maintain the insistent rhythm that Gounod demanded. Nor is the tone brilliant or full-bodied enough. The present reviewer has a record of the Waltz from *Mireille* made by Mme. Pons for Odeon in 1930 with the modest inscription under her name of *Chanteuse legere des Casinos de Cannes et Deauville!* The charming French soprano has come a long way since those early days of struggle for recognition, and it is not difficult to report that the present performance of the *Mireille* number is immeasurably superior to the earlier one.

Maurice Abravanel and Andre Kostelanetz divide honors as conductor for the *prima-donna*, and the smooth recording is in every way satisfactory.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Herbert: Babes in Toyland—Selections. Kenny Baker and Karen Kemple with chorus and orchestra conducted by Alexander Smallens. 5-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-419. \$4.25.

For some unknown reason Victor Herbert's ever-popular *Babes in Toyland* has been consistently neglected by the record manufacturers. It is therefore an event in the world of recording when such a complete and highly satisfactory album as the present one is made available. Kenny Baker and Karen Kemple are admirable exponents of these pleasing selections and the fine chorus and orchestra under the brilliant direction of Alexander Smallens gives them excellent support. Decca adds another attractive item to its long list of outstanding recordings of musical plays of yesterday and today.

All of the selections from this tuneful operetta that you will remember, and some that you may have forgotten, will be found in this delightful album, including the ever-popular: *I Can't Do the Sum; March of the Toys; Toyland; and The Military Ball.*

Coleridge-Taylor: Hiawatha—Onaway! Awake, Beloved. One side, and **Thomas: Esmeralda—O Vision Enchanting.** Webster Booth (tenor) with Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (V-C-3407). \$1.90.

There is an ever-increasing demand in this country for recordings by Webster Booth. The present disc arrived in a recent shipment of records from England. Neither of the selections is of great musical worth, although they are pleasant enough to listen to. Mr. Booth sings both of them exquisitely but the orchestral accompaniments are not as clear as we would like them to be—this perhaps is the fault of the recorders.

Sacred Songs. Dorothy Maynor (soprano) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Sylvan Levin and the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1043. \$3.85.

Within the covers of this album you will find some of the most distinguished singing heard in a very long time. It is hard to understand Victor's long neglect of Miss Maynor, for, considering the length of time she has been under contract, and the total output of her records, this remarkable singer's appearances on records have been all too infrequent.

The present album contains some of the greatest sacred music of all time, for only musical Titans are here dealt with—Handel, Bach and Mozart. You will find *Hear Ye, Israel!* from *Elijah* and *How Beautiful are the Feet* from *The Messiah* delivered in the perfect Handelian manner with an ethereally beautiful tone. Mozart's *Alleluja* from the motet *Exultate Jubilate* is taken at a very brisk tempo. The rapid scale-passages fairly bubble along; the effect is joyous and brilliant as it should be, and Miss Maynor's style is a constant delight.

The album is concluded with three arias from the great works of Bach: *Only Bleed and Break Thou Loving Heart* from *The St. Matthew Passion* displays Miss Maynor's instrumental style and religious fervor to perfection; *Laudamus Te* from *The Mass in B Minor*, and *Now Let Every Tongue Adore Thee* from the cantata, *Sleepers Awake*.

Sylvan Levin and an unnamed orchestra supply fine accompaniments for Miss Maynor, but the last number (which has already appeared on a single record) enjoys the background of the Philadelphia Orchestra directed by Eugene Ormandy.

This is truly great singing, and we urge all who are interested in the art of vocalization and of a pure and distinguished style to listen to these records. They will be rewarded.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Night and Day—Show Hits by Cole Porter. Allan Jones (tenor) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Ray Sinatra. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1033. \$4.85.

Here is a great combination for those who like good "Show Tunes"—Cole Porter, with a long list of musical comedies to his credit, and Allan Jones, star of the movies, the radio, and the concert platform. Ray Sinatra has conducted these performances with skill and fine taste, and the excellent chorus gives Mr. Jones appropriate support in several of the selections.

There is nothing much more to say about this attractive album except to mention the songs that it contains; they are: *Night and Day*; *I've Got You Under My Skin*; *Begin the Beguine*; *Why Shouldn't I*; *What is This Thing Called Love*; *Rosalie*; *Easy to Love*; and *In the Still of the Night*.

Come-All-Ye's. Sung by Pat Harrington with Orchestra accompaniments. 6-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-430. \$3.50.

Here is an album to cheer the hearts of all true Irishmen—a dozen of the most popular Irish ditties sung by the inimitable Pat Harrington. These curious songs are known as "Come-All-Ye's," probably because they are usually sung at christenings or other gatherings to which persons are invited by word of mouth. The word is passed that tonight is the night so "Come one, come all ye."

We will give a complete list of the ditties in this album, because it is very likely that some of our readers will find among them a song or two for which they have been looking for years. They are: *Finnegan's Ball*; *McSorley's Two Beautiful Twins*; *Tread on the Tail of Me Goat*; *Irish Jubilee*; *Paddy McGinty's Goat*; *Dear Old Donegal*; *Never Take the Horseshoe From the Door*; *Brannigan's Pup*; *Peggy*; *That's Mr. Brannigan Our Next M. P.*; *Kitty of Coleraine*; and *Erin Go Bragh*.

Pat Harrington has a very pleasing voice and his perfect diction makes every word of each song easily understood—and that's important in such ditties—it's the story they tell that most folks want to hear. Decca has supplied a booklet with this album giving the words of most of the songs.

State Fair—Selections. Dick Haymes (baritone) with orchestra accompaniments. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-412. \$2.

Dick Haymes, who was featured in the Twentieth-Century-Fox smash hit *State Fair*, sings very acceptably five selections from the picture and adds *The Lord's Been Good to Me* for good measure. The numbers from *State Fair* are: *That's for Me*; *It Might as Well be Spring*; *Isn't It Kinda Fun*; *It's a Grand Night for Singing*; and *All I Owe Ioway*.

Decca supplies an attractive little booklet with this set containing the story of the picture and the words of the songs that Dick Haymes sings—a nice souvenir of one of the most popular movies of recent months.

Burl Ives—A Collection of Ballads and Folk Songs. Sung by Burl Ives with guitar accompaniment. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-407. \$3.50.

Burl Ives is probably the most popular ballad singer in America today, and a new album of his records is always an important item. For those who are making a collection of his records, it is only necessary to mention the titles of the selections and to state that Burl is in his usual form and is accompanying himself on his old "geetar."

The ballads in this album are: *The Fox*; *Dan Tucker*; *E-rie-e Canal*; *Dublin City*; *Cockle Shells*; *Lolly-too-dum*; *Eddystone Light*; *Hullabaloo*; *Saturday Night*; *Aunt Rhody*; *Nicodemus*; and *Venezuela*.

Faure: The Palms. Sung in English. One side, and **Schubert: Ave Maria.** Sung in Latin. Thomas L. Thomas (baritone) with Gustave Haenschen and his All-String Orchestra and Chorus. 1-12" disc (V-11-9109). \$1.

Thomas L. Thomas has a gorgeous baritone voice, and we would have been perfectly satisfied if he had sung these two favorite sacred selections without, the, shall we say, help, of Mr. Haenschen's choristers. Undoubtedly, Mr. Haenschen arranged these selections with a radio performance in mind, and as a radio performance they would be quite striking. You hear such a performance once and then it is gone forever. Any novel arrangement of solo voice and chorus may strike one's fancy for the moment, but to have such a performance on a record that one plays over and over again is entirely another matter. Perhaps we are old-fashioned, perhaps we don't know a really stylish performance when we hear one, perhaps we don't know what the present record-buying public will like—only the success of this disc when it reaches the dealers' shops will tell that.

Porter: Ev'rytime We Say Goodbye. One side, and **Porter: Only Another Boy and Girl** (both selections from "Seven Lively Arts"). Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 1-10" disc (V-10-1156).

Miss Kirsten has selected a couple of Cole Porter numbers from a musical show that is all but forgotten, and sings them in a very acceptable manner. We don't believe this disc will cause any particular excitement.

Brahms: Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer, Op. 105, No. 2. One side, and **Brahms: Wiegenlied, Op. 49, No. 4.** Elisabeth Schumann (soprano) with orchestra. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1562). \$1.85.

There has always been a large demand in this country for this charming little disc. A recent shipment of records from England contained a few copies of it and so we are merely mentioning that fact for those who would like to add this record to their libraries.

PIANO



Prokofieff: Sonata No. 7, Op. 83. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1042. \$2.85.

The present work is a very important one in the realm of modern music for the pianoforte. It dates from 1942 and it won for its composer the coveted Stalin Prize. It was introduced to America a couple of years ago by the artist who has made this superb

recording of it. Certainly Victor is to be congratulated for issuing such a timely and highly interesting album.

Prokofieff, a very able pianist in his own right, thoroughly understands his instrument, and there is no one writing for the piano today who is producing more intriguing and always playable works. In the present sonata, Prokofieff has sandwiched in between the first and third movements, both of which are rich in novel harmonic inventions and unusual rhythms, an *andante*, almost romantic in character, which is one of the most beautiful movements yet to come from the pen of this great Russian composer.

Students of the piano, and music lovers generally, will surely wish to investigate this important album. We hope that Victor will make enough of them available for those discerning collectors who will wish to add this album to their libraries.

Ferguson: Five Bagatelles. Myra Hess (piano). 1-12" disc (V-C-3423). \$1.90.

Howard Ferguson was born in Belfast in 1908. He was a student of R. O. Morris at the Royal Conservatory of Music and studied privately with Harold Samuel. He is best known for a sonata for violin and piano and a partita for orchestra, which is also available in a version for two pianos. Although Ferguson tends toward the modern idiom to some extent, his works are pretty soundly based on the classical tradition.

The present little pieces were dedicated to Myra Hess, the artist who has so felicitously recorded them. Mr. Ferguson's friend, Arnold Van Wyck, provided the composer with five notes and based upon them he produced these five little pieces. While each is a separate piece, they are all more or less tied together—the theme of the third appears again in the fifth. In them we have a pianist writing for his instrument; something that we have very little of these days. And when we have that, and a pianist of the calibre of Myra Hess playing, we have something that should warm the heart of anyone who has a true love and appreciation for the pianoforte. Piano enthusiasts please note.

Liszt: Etude in D flat. One side, and **Liszt: Waldesrauschen.** Harold Bauer (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-9113). \$1.

It has been a long time since Victor has issued any recordings by Harold Bauer. We have no way of knowing, but we venture the guess that the selections on this disc were not made recently. The particular type of surface noise reminds us of piano recordings that were made in the early days of electric recording.

Mr. Bauer plays these pleasing Liszt selections in a most ingratiating manner and his many admirers will welcome this opportunity of having another of his records to add to their libraries, we are sure.

Serenade—Italian Folk Songs. Carmen Cavallaro (piano) with rhythm accompaniment. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-415. \$2.50.

Carmen Cavallaro, in his inimitable style, presents a series of Italian folk melodies that make very pleasant listening. They must be heard to be appreciated. The following selections are included in this attractive album: *Come Back to Sorrento*; *Oh, Marie*; *Toselli's Serenade*; *Tango of Roses*; *Ciribiribin*; *Funiculi Funicula*; *O Sole Mio*; and *Santa Lucia*.

The piano reproduction is excellent and the surfaces of the discs are particularly quiet.



DICTION

Lost Horizon. Ronald Colman with supporting cast. Musical score composed and directed by Victor Young. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set DA-402. \$3.50.

Those persons who remember the great thrill that came to them when they saw *Lost Horizon* with Ronald Coleman will doubtless be fascinated by the superb recording that Decca presents this month. Those who have not seen the picture will certainly want to after hearing this dramatic and attention-compelling recorded version. We understand that the picture will be shown in those theatres that specialize in revivals of some of the more important older movies.

Victor Young has supplied some excellent music for this album and directs it with taste. *Lost Horizon* takes its place in the now long list of recorded stories that Decca has made available during the last few years. This company seems to specialize in this type of recording and has certainly produced some masterpieces in this field. Some of the outstanding sets were: *Alice in Wonderland*; *The Count of Monte Cristo*; *Moby Dick*; *The Snow Goose*; and *Mr. Pickwick's Christmas*.

VIOLIN



Achron—arr. Auer: *Hebrew Melody*. One side, and **Sibelius**: *Mazurka, Op. 81, No. 1*. Mischa Elman (violin) with piano accompaniments by Leopold Mittman. 1-12" disc (V-11-9111). \$1.

Mischa Elman still has a great host of ardent admirers among record collectors, although he has made comparatively few recordings in recent years. We are sure that they will be delighted with the present disc. The selections are attractive and Elman plays them in his always pleasing style. They have been well recorded.

CONCERTO



Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 18. Gyorgy Sandor (piano) and Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-605. \$4.85.

Columbia's new recording of the popular Rachmaninoff *Concerto No. 2 in C Minor* is a splendid example of clarity and balance. The artists are the brilliant young Hungarian pianist, Gyorgy Sandor, and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York under Artur Rodzinsky. This is the finest recording of the concerto to date, quite outdistancing the classic performance of Rachmaninoff and Stokowski (M-58) and the later one by Moiseiwitch and Goehr (M-666).

Gyorgy Sandor brings a youthfully ardent and romantic quality to this music, which makes for a brilliant and satisfactory performance. His technique is impressive and his tone is of great clarity and backed by a temperament which emerges in no uncertain terms from these eight record-surfaces. Dr. Rodzinsky also seems entirely in his element in the lyric surge of Rachmaninoff's music, and he blends his tone and his scale of dynamics most shrewdly with the performance of the soloist. His string section sounds far more luminous than it has on many another occasion.

Technically, this is a capital job; a fine example of how the combination of piano and orchestra should be recorded. The only regrettable element is the roughness of some of the surfaces, but this may have been an idiosyncrasy of this particular set. If not, the situation can be remedied when better materials are put to use. This set can otherwise be enthusiastically recommended. D.

MISCELLANEOUS



Thanksgiving Service—Excerpts. (St. Paul's Cathedral, May 13, 1945). 3-12" discs (V-C-3447 to V-C-3449) in album. \$5.70.

For a description of this set of discs, we turn to the pages of *The Gramophone* (London) and we find the following under the heading "Let Us Give Thanks":

"It was to be expected that there would be some records of the Victory in Europe celebrations, and congratulations are due those concerned for providing an adequate yet concise review of the principal events. Whether these records are treasured as

memories of great times, or regarded as authentic references by the historian, some of them, at any rate, will remain for many years as the most significant achievement of the gramophone in its role of public remembrance.

"The climax was reached with the Service at St. Paul's Cathedral, which was attended by the King and Queen, with perhaps the most fully representative congregation of their subjects that has ever met together in the vast building. . . . And although the selected portions of the Service embraced by these records can give no hint of the wonderful spectacle within the Cathedral, they do convey an impressive picture in sound of a very great occasion, and capture the spacious atmosphere surrounding the gathering. The selections made for the records are mostly of the music, and are as follows:

"C3447 contains the Bidding: *Brethren, we are met together on this day to pour out our hearts in fervent thanksgiving*, spoken by the Dean (Dr. Matthews), the Hymn 'All People that on earth do dwell,' followed by the special Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Anthem of Supplication, which was Wesley's 'Lead me Lord, in Thy righteousness,' the soprano solos being taken with lovely effect, by a chorus of the choristers singing in unison. The St. Paul's boys, back in their own home at last after more than five years of evacuation to Truro, were joined at this Service by a number of the Chapel Royal Choristers and the boys of St. Mary's, Reigate.

"C3448 has a massive rendering of 'Now thank we all our God,' and the commencement of Stanford's noble setting of the Te Deum. This is concluded on C3449, and is followed by the Blessing,

some stately Fanfares and the National Anthem.

"Extraneous noises which might have been expected from so great a congregation are almost nonexistent. So, too, is the notorious echo—yet the tone is quite recognisable to those who are familiar with the Cathedral. One misses the thunderous rumblings of the great organ which is still under repair. Nevertheless, the smaller instrument used gives quite adequate support."

Bells of Bath Abbey; St. Mary's, Puddletown; Westminster Abbey; York Minster; Coventry Cathedral. Rung on Victory Day, May 8, 1945. Frank Phillips (commentator). 1-10" disc (V-B-9417). \$1.35.

Here is an odd little disc that has real historic interest. A recording has been made of the ringing of the bells of some of England's most famous churches on Victory Day, May 8, 1945. Collectors of such items will doubtless welcome the opportunity of adding this unusual record to their collections.

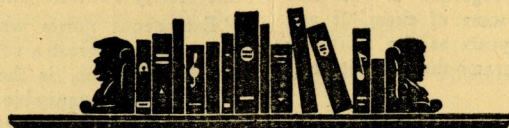
Morning and Evening Worship on the Cathedral Chimes. Supervised by George H. Shackley, Musical Director, Federal Council of Churches. 4-10" discs in album. Bibletone Set N. \$4.50.

These chime records will be of especial interest to churches and memorial parks that are equipped with amplifying systems, and for use of little theatre groups, and broadcasting stations. On these four discs will be found fifteen hymns, among which are: *Holy, Holy, Holy; Now the Day is Over; Doxology; Abide With Me; Come Thou Almighty King; Blest Be the Tie That Binds; Sun of My Soul* and others.

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BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

- The Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents.* Edited by Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel. Illustrated. 431 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$6.
- Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death.* By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.
- The Musical Scene.* By Virgil Thomson. x + 301 + xv pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.
- Evenings With Music.* By Syd Skolsky. 382 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co. (New York). Price \$3.
- Adventures in Symphonic Music.* By Edward Downes. Decorations by John O'Hara Cosgrave, II. 323 pp. Farrar & Rinehart (New York). Price \$2.50.
- Florestan: The Life and Work of Robert Schumann.* By Robert Haven Schauffler. xiv, 574 pp. Illustrated. Henry Holt & Co. (New York). Price \$3.75.
- This Modern Music.* By John Tasker Howard. 234 pp. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. (New York). Price, \$2.50.
- The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music.* George Clark Leslie, Supervising Editor. 558 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.95.
- The History of Music in Performance.* Frederick Dorian, with an introduction by Eugene Ormandy. 387 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$4.
- Bad Boy of Music.* By George Antheil. 378 pp. Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.
- The Record Book.* By David Hall. 1070 pp. Smith & Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$4.95.
- The Concerto.* By Abraham Veinus. 312 pp. Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.50.
- What We Hear in Music.* (Twelfth Revised Edition.) By Anne Shaw Faulkner. 704 pp. Illustrated RCA Victor Division (Camden, N. J.). Price \$2.25.
- Men and Women Who Make Music.* By David Ewen. xii + 244 pp. Illustrated. The Readers Press (New York). Price \$2.75.
- The Music Goes Round.* F. W. Gaisberg, 273 pp. Illustrated. The Macmillan Company (New York). Price \$3.
- Composer and Critic.* By Max Graf. 331 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Biblestone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musiercraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, and V—Victor.

The New Records

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Listening to the Orchestra. By Kitty Barne. 299 pp. Illustrated. The Bobbs-Merrill Company (Indianapolis). Price \$2.75.

Listening to Music Creatively. By Edwin J. Stringham. xx + 479 pp. Illustrated. Prentice-Hall, Inc. (New York.) Price \$5.

These two fine books on music appreciation very nicely supplement each other. The first by Kitty Barne might well be considered by the elementary student and Mr. Stringham's is for one who is further advanced.

Miss Barne seems to have in mind the person who is interested in symphonic music although knowing very little about it. She starts with a minute description of a symphony orchestra, describing and picturing each instrument, giving a diagram of the seating arrangement of the various players, and making everything so clear that one who has never attended a symphony concert gets an excellent idea of what it is like. Following this, she gives short but illuminating biographical sketches of the most important composers from Monteverdi (1567-1643) to those of the present day. A chapter on the importance of the audience and the part it plays in a successful concert, and a list of some two hundred outstanding recordings, brings Miss Barne's interesting little book to a close. A very full index is available for those who wish to use this book for reference.

Mr. Stringham, whose reputation as a composer and teacher is well established, assumes that his readers have a fundamental knowledge of the subject. At least they should be well acquainted with the matter that Miss Barne covers in her book. His aim is to help the reader to form his own opinion of, and develop his own taste for, great music, by listening to it intelligently. He covers briefly, but with rare discretion, the many musical forms and the out-

standing musicians who have been responsible for the development of this art through the ages. As this book will be of especial value to teachers and music study groups, it has been carefully indexed.

For the many thousands of persons who are becoming interested in fine music through the radio and the phonograph, these two books offer a most interesting course of study, one that will surely help them to a more thorough appreciation and knowledge of what they are listening to. To know great music better is certainly to enjoy it more fully.

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BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE. All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive* of *excise tax*. In ordering please add 5 per cent to list prices quoted.

ORCHESTRA



Copland: Appalachian Spring—Suite. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1046. \$4.00.

Serge Koussevitzky has done it again! What would our better American composers of the present day do without the pioneering spirit of the Boston Symphony's great leader? Not only does Dr. Koussevitzky place his distinguished forces at the service of countless contemporary native compositions, but he records, whenever possible, the best of these for that great unnumbered audience of phonograph lis-

teners. The evaluation of such an attitude is incalculable.

Aaron Copland's *Appalachian Spring* is in every sense one of the finest orchestral works that has come out of America. It is noble and spacious, conceived with unerring honesty of means and purpose. It is sincere in its strength; quietly evocative of the great fundamental traditions of our country. It is good music to listen to at this time, when so many perplexing questions about our future course as a nation must, of necessity, arise out of a period of change and uncertainty.

Commissioned by that up-and-coming octogenarian, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, as a ballet for Martha Graham and her dance-group, the music was composed and finished in 1944, receiving its world-premiere in Washington during October of that year. Mr. Copland's score tells of a pioneer celebration in springtime around a newly built farmhouse in the Pennsylvania hills, during the early part of the last century. It tells of a bride and her young farmer-husband in the spring of a new world, a spring of stalwart ardor and aspiration; of a revivalist and his followers; of the stern body of village elders; of country fiddlers, square dances and neighbors.

Appalachian Spring won for its composer, not only the 1945 Pulitzer Prize for music, but also the Award of the Music Critics' Circle of New York for the outstanding theatrical composition of the 1944-45 season.

Mr. Copland has used no waste motions. His goal and course is as direct and pure as a mountain stream. He has employed a fascinating Shaker theme for the solo clarinet (at beginning of record-side 5), which he has developed in five variations.

The composer must indeed be gratified by the deeply understood performance Dr. Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony have traced on six record-sides. It is in every way an inspiring accomplishment.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Dvorák: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World"). The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-570. \$5.85.

It is just as well that this latest recording of an old chestnut is as good as it is. Otherwise there would have been even less excuse for the Philadelphia Orchestra to devote its time to such an often-recorded piece of music, when there is so much still lying in the outer darkness of unrecorded compositions.

As it is, there are already three excellent and available sets of the *New World Symphony*. Stokowski's, made with the Philadelphia Orchestra (V-273), is still, despite its age, a potent and satisfying account of Dvorák's music. His later recording with the All-American Youth Orchestra (C-416) is more modern in sound and boasts the same fine interpretative color which one finds in the earlier version (which, by the way, is surprisingly well recorded, considering its

vintage!). Then there is Szell's flavorsome and exciting account of the *New World* with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra (V-469), a set which has, with justification, received much praise.

It is only fair to state that the present album contains the most realistically and sonorously recorded performance of the symphony. Furthermore, Eugene Ormandy gives a particularly vital account of the score, and the Philadelphia Orchestra has long been an old hand at playing it. Curiously enough, the beautiful English horn solo of the *Largo* does not emerge as clearly stenciled here as it does in some of the earlier sets, notably the Stokowski and Philadelphia Orchestra version. It sounds as though the altogether admirable Mr. Minsker were seated too far back among the other players.

And so, to conclude as we began, we reiterate that it is just as well that this latest version of Dvorák's *New World Symphony* is as good as it is.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Tchaikovsky: Theme and Variations from Suite No. 3 in G, Op. 55. Five sides, and **Tchaikovsky: Mazeppa—Cossack Dance.** Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent. 3-12" discs (V-C-3338 to V-C-3340) in album. Also available in automatic sequence (V-C-7577 to V-C-7579). \$5.70.

On these records one will find some Tchaikovsky music that will be new to many of our readers we are sure. As far as we know no other recording of it is available. The *Theme and Variations* is the last movement from this composer's *Suite No. 3 in G major*. The other movements are *Élégie*; *Valse melancholique*; and *Scherzo*.

The present quite long movement is uneven in character. There are several inspired moments when things seem to go along splendidly and then there are passages when it seems that the composer is trying, oh so hard, to keep things going. On the whole, we believe that most music lovers will find it interesting and pleasing, probably not as much so as the real Tchaikovsky lovers, but then no one would expect that.

The Liverpool Philharmonic gives a rousing performance. It might have been a little more subtle. We would have been better pleased if Dr. Sargent had shown just a little more finesse. However, the reproduction is capital, and one can't have everything to his liking.

The *Cossack Dance*, which occupies the odd side of the last disc, adds nothing to the value of this set.

R.

Bliss: Music for Strings. BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 3-12" discs (V-DB-3257 to V-DB-3259) in album. Also available in automatic sequence (V-DB-8342 to V-DB-8344). \$7.50.

In a recent shipment from England there were a few sets of this interesting item. It has not been

available in this country for several years. It was reviewed in the April, 1938, issue of THE NEW RECORDS from which the following was taken.

Arthur Bliss (1891-) was born in London and educated at Rugby and at Pembroke College, Cambridge. He studied for a short time before the war with Stanford, Vaughan Williams and Holst. He served in the English army throughout the conflict. While in France he associated with the ultramodernists and became something of an *enfant terrible*. Time has mellowed him, however, and today we find him a much more conservative writer.

The present work reveals a wide brush in the contrapuntal manner of the concertos of another day. It has a warmth that is comforting, and we feel that better acquaintance will show a composition of more than ordinary interest. Sir Adrian has given it a most careful performance, in which he has probably had the assistance of the composer. Especially fine reproduction is an added feature.

Music of Tchaikovsky. The Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia conducted by Andre Kostelanetz. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-601. \$3.85.

The subtitle of this lovely album might very well have been "Music for a Summer Evening." Kostelanetz has chosen a half dozen of the more popular Tchaikovsky melodies, and, with the aid of the very fine Robin Hood Dell Orchestra, presents them in a most attractive manner. We are happy to say that the extreme lushness, which attends so many of Kostelanetz's renditions, is missing. In its stead we have straightforward performances in excellent taste, which in some cases approach the style and manner of Sir Thomas Beecham. This is high praise indeed. The reproduction is satisfactory.

Among the selections in this album will be found the ever-popular *Sleeping Beauty Waltz*; *Andante Cantabile*; *Waltz of the Flowers*; and *None But the Lonely Heart*.

Ireland: A London Overture. Three sides, and **Jo hann Strauss**—arr. Jacob: **Radetzky March**. Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent. 2-12" discs (C-DX-1155 and C-DX-1156). \$4.

The English composer, John Ireland (1879-), turned this one out a few years ago and this is the first time that we have had an opportunity to hear it. It reminds us of Elgar but is not nearly as good as most of that venerable gentleman's orchestral pieces. London is a big rambling subject and the present work seems to ramble a bit without seeming to get anywhere in particular. Perhaps if we had time to play it a few times, we might be more favorably impressed than we are at this moment, but we rather doubt it. Unless you know this work and particularly want to add it to your library, we suggest you hear it before buying it.

Handel: The Messiah—Overture and Pastoral Symphony. One side each. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Maurice Miles. 1-12" disc (C-DX-1182). \$2.

Occasionally there is a call for a recording of the Overture to *The Messiah* on an individual record—the domestic catalogs do not list any, and so this imported disc should fill the need quite nicely. Both it and the Pastoral Symphony have been beautifully played by the London Symphony on this disc, and as the reproduction is of the best, this should prove a very satisfactory record for those who are interested in this music.

Strauss Polkas. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 3-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-1049. \$3.

Here is an album to drive dull care away—six lively polkas by various members of the famous Strauss family—zip and brilliance abound. The Boston "Pops" are in their element and they make the most of their opportunity. Reproduction—excellent.

Liszt—trans. Kindler: **Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6.** National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Kindler. 1-12" disc (V-11-9154). \$1.

Hans Kindler has done an interesting and pleasing job in arranging this piece for orchestra, and with his National Symphony gives a bang-up good performance. The reproduction is "tops."

Rule Britannia (Arne) and The British Grenadiers. The BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. One side, and **Fanfares (H. Menges)** and excerpts from **Richard II** and **King John (Shakespeare)** and **God Save the King (arr. Elgar)**. John Gielgud (speaking) with Massed Choirs and Orchestra. 1-10" disc (V-B9420). \$1.85.

This unusual little disc was issued in England to celebrate VE day. The particular feature of it is the fine reading of the selections from Shakespeare by the celebrated English actor, John Gielgud. They alone are worth the price of this disc.

CONCERTO



Handel: Concerto Grosso in G minor, Op. 3, No. 10. Leon Goossens (oboe) and Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Basil Cameron. 1-12" disc (C-DX-1144). \$2.

As far as we know, this is the first recording of this pleasant little Handel work. It is not profound, probably an early composition, but nice enough in its humble way. It is divided into four short movements, two of which fit on each side of the present disc. Goossens, as usual, leaves nothing to be desired in his solo work, and is well supported by the Liverpool Philharmonic.

Brahms: Concerto in D major for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 77. Joseph Szigeti (violin) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Nine sides, and **Brahms: Sonata No. 3 in D minor for Violin and Piano, Op. 108—Adagio.** Joseph Szigeti (violin) and Leonid Hambro (piano). 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-603. \$5.85.

The Brahms *Violin Concerto* has made its way into favor rather slowly through the years; but today it stands next to the Beethoven concerto in the opinion of a majority. It has great technical difficulties, and is filled with gravity, although there is much emotional tenderness in its lyrical parts. And while it is classed as a romantic work, it has far greater virility than the romantic German violin concertos of Mendelssohn and Bruch and Spohr. The development of the abundant thematic material in the first movement is a masterpiece of craftsmanship—it may be more masterly than inspired at times. The last movement, in rondo form, has a somewhat Hungarian flavor, and is indeed energetic and robust.

Of all the interpreters the Brahms concerto has ever had, Szigeti would have to take second place to none. His conception of the music, and his ability to project it has been admired by multitudes (violinists marvel at it). His only serious competitor on records is Heifetz (with the Boston Symphony on Victor M-581), whose interpretation is suave and eloquent; but the intrinsic quality of Szigeti's reading is apparent.

The reproduction of the present set is real and life-like, with the balance between orchestra and violin ideal. Ormandy is a sympathetic Brahms interpreter, and one of the best accompanists of the day; and his contribution to the set has been realized with remarkable fidelity. On the review copy of this set, the final chord on side eight is chopped off rather crudely—a small matter considering the work as a whole. The tenth side filler is the same as used on Szigeti's earlier Columbia set. The piano sounds as though it were a block away, indicating a poor balance. That, however, is no drawback to the album, for the concerto is magnificent through and through. S.

Mozart: Concerto in A major, K. 488. Denis Matthews (piano) and Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. 3-12" discs (C-DX-1167 to C-DX-1169) in album. Also available in automatic sequence (C-DX-8203 to C-DX-8205). \$6.

A modern recording of this lovely concerto has been needed for a long time. Both Artur Schnabel and Marguerite Long made recordings of it in the early days of electrical recording but we recall no other versions.

The present version might well be termed a very intimate one—a quiet restrained performance, which we feel is in the best of taste—a performance that suits the Mozart music perfectly. Of course, we realize that

there are those who would like it played *à la* Horowitz, with some zip and bang to it, but we are not of that school. We also realize that some may say that the piano does not stand out as conspicuously as it might in this recording but we say that it blends nicely with the orchestra and at some points blends quite into it. We think that that is all to the good. We don't claim that this is the best possible performance that we could imagine, but it is a highly pleasing one, and, until a better one comes along, this one should prove quite satisfactory and give much joy to those who find Mozart one of the most charming of all composers.

The reproduction is excellent, and the record surfaces, as are the surfaces of all English records, are just about as smooth as glass. R.



OPERA

Tchaikovsky: Excerpts from Three Operas. (Sung in Russian). Soloists, with Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra conducted by A. Melik-Pashayev. 3-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 752. \$7.25.

Eugene Onegin: Introduction and Duet from Act I; Trio from Act II, Scene 2; Dialogue and Onegin's Aria from Act III, Scene 2.

Pique-Dame: Yeletsky's Aria from Act II, Scene 2. *Iolanthe*: Iolanthe's Aria from Scene I; King Rene's Aria from Scene 4.

Glinka: Russian and Ludmilla—excerpts. (Sung in Russian). Soloists, chorus, and orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre conducted by S. Samosud. 2-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 751. \$5.

Here are more operatic recordings out of the USSR! Last January we had a set of vinylite discs, released by Asch, of Borodin's *Prince Igor*, and this month we have an album, made from the same materials and released through the same company, of Tchaikovsky opera excerpts—*Eugene Onegin*, *Pique Dame* and *Iolanthe*, as well as a second album with selections from Glinka's *Russian and Ludmilla*. All the passages presented from these various operas will be unfamiliar to the average American listener. This in itself is interesting. As in the earlier *Prince Igor* set, it is the Bolshoi Theatre (Moscow State Theatre), its artists, conductors and orchestra which has been employed.

For those particularly interested in Russian operatic music, or the music of Tchaikovsky, these sets will prove valuable and engaging. The singers are not overly impressive, though the tenor, Kromshenko, the baritone, Shara-Talian, and the bass, Pirogov, have good voices. If this is the very best Russia can produce, with all its present stress on art and music and theatre, we must confess that we can turn back to the singers of the Western world with pleasure and enthusiasm. The voices from the Bolshoi sound thoroughly Russian—and why shouldn't they? But not one of them sounds like star material or a really first-

class vocalist.

The Tchaikovsky album contains three excerpts from *Eugene Onegin*: the first act duet by Tatiana and Olga, a trio from Act II by Olga, Lenski and Onegin, and Onegin's melodious little *arietta* from the second scene of Act III. Yaletsky's Aria is the one excerpt from *Pique Dame*, and it is finely sung by the baritone, Shara-Talian. The two excerpts from the little known *Iolanta* (produced St. Petersburg, 1892) are *Iolanta's* Aria sung by a strident soprano, one Zhukovskaya, and King Rene's Aria by the excellent bass, Pirogov.

Except for its overture, the music of Glinka's *Russian and Ludmilla* is little known in America. It is, therefore, more than interesting to be able to hear some of these Russian arias and vocal excerpts sung by native artists. Here we have Bayan's song, *There's a Desert Country*, thinly yet feelingly sung by the tenor, Kromshenko; the Persian Church with incidental solo by Stavorvskaya—this is a particularly colorful passage—and Gorislava's lengthy *cavatina* presented by a piercing and unsteady soprano of undoubted temperament—Slivinskaya. Despite these various vocal shortcomings, we urge you to listen to these unusual operatic pages.

The recording, though better than the former *Prince Igor* set, is still far short of standards we have become accustomed to in Europe and America. The much vaunted vinylite surfaces are anything but smooth; maybe they will improve with repeated playings.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Meyerbeer: Huguenots—Nobil Dama. One side, and **Donizetti: Favorita**—A Tanto Amor (Sung in Italian). Mario Ancona (baritone) with orchestra (re-recorded from 1906 Cylinder). 1-10" disc (CRS No. 13). \$2.

Meyerbeer: Huguenots—Qui sotto il ciel. One side, and **Tu non mi vuoi piu bene** (composer unknown). (Sung in Italian.) Enrico Caruso (tenor) with piano accompaniment (re-recorded from 1900 Cylinder). 1-10" disc (CRS No. 6). \$2.

Rossini: Semiramide—Bel raggio lusinghier. One side, and **Ponchielli: Gioconda**—Suicidio. (Sung in Italian.) Celestina Boninsegna (soprano) with orchestra. (Re-recorded from original 1910 recording.) 1-12" disc (CRS No. 11). \$2.50.

The three discs listed above will be of prime interest to those who collect records of historical value. The first two were re-recorded from old cylinder records, and the Boninsegna record from an old disc, whose master had been destroyed many years ago. All of the voices will be easily recognized by those who are familiar with them. Ancona and Boninsegna's voices come through quite round and full, but Caruso's, although the quality is there, is very weak. The orchestral accompaniments are thin and weak, as were most of them in the days of acoustical recording, and

the piano on the Caruso disc resembles a banjo. We have come a long way toward perfection in the reproduction of the various musical instruments, but fortunately the human voice has always recorded quite well, as these very early recordings fully demonstrate.

The interest in such records as the above is growing quite rapidly these days, and so we will from time to time mention them in our columns as items of sufficient merit are made available.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Brahms: Trio in A minor, Op. 114. Louis Kentner (piano). Reginald Kell (clarinet), and Anthony Pini (violinello). 3-12" discs (C-DX-1007 to C-DX-1009) in album. Also available in automatic sequence (C-DX-8150 to C-DX-8152). \$6.

We have been waiting for several years for an opportunity to hear this recording. We read the glowing reviews that it received when it was released in England in the spring of 1941. Except for a mediocre recording on Musicraft, we know of no other recorded version of this work.

Many of Brahms' most enthusiastic champions have been, we feel, unnecessarily apologetic of this work. It is continually compared with the great clarinet quintet, and, of course, it is found wanting. It was unquestionably an experiment and, but for the rather uninspired *Andantino*, is, in our opinion, a mighty pleasing composition. The artists who have recorded for English Columbia have done a superb job. The only criticism we can offer of the performance is that Mr. Kentner might have held himself back a bit in the finale—he is a little too enthusiastic there, and the piano claims too much of the spotlight. Otherwise we have nothing but praise for the performance.

As usual, the English recorders have given us a most lifelike reproduction. R.

CHORAL



Bach: Cantata No. 78: Jesus, Thou My Weariest Spirit. Sung in English. Mack Harrell (bass), Lucius Metz (tenor) with the Bach Choir of Bethlehem and Orchestra conducted by Ifor Jones. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1045. \$4.85.

At long last, the nationally known Bach Choir of Bethlehem, Pa., has made its first album of records for RCA Victor. That it has taken all these years to arrive at this decision is indeed strange, for this group of singers is in all probability the finest instrument at the disposal of Bach's music in the world today.

For its first recorded performance, the Bethlehem Choir and its talented director, Dr. Ifor Jones, have selected *Cantata No. 78: Jesus, Thou My Weariest Spirit*. This is in some ways an admirable choice, for it is a work of infinite variety and invention in the

choral-cantata form. However, its lovely passages only give a hint of the strength and the massive, cumulative power of which the Bach Choir of Bethlehem is capable. To experience this, one must hear the Choir in the greater choral works of Bach, such as his incalculably wonderful *Mass in B Minor*, to take an example.

Cantata No. 78 is divided into several clearly marked sections, which offer great variety. After a brief and affecting orchestral introduction, there is a somber and mournful chorus, *Jesus, Thou My Wearied Spirit*, built on the same theme as the *Crucifixus* in the *B Minor Mass*. This is followed by one of the loveliest passages in all Bach, the soprano-alto choral duet, *We Hasten with Feeble but Diligent Footsteps*. In this lovely duet, all the happiness and gayety of religious experience is most beautifully and engagingly expressed in a rhythm which captivates. Following is the tenor recitative *Ah! I Am a Child of Evil!*, a piercingly poignant passage, followed by the aria, *Thy Blood Which Doth My Guilt Redeem*. Then follows the bass solo recitative and aria, *The Wounds and O Lord My Conscience!* The cantata comes to an end with the fine and sturdy chorale, *Lord, I Trust Thee*.

This is as fine choral singing as has been heard on records. Every member of the Bach Choir at Bethlehem is a Bach specialist, and so it is not hard to see just why this music emerges with such complete authority and in such an idiomatic form. As we have already suggested, the tonal and dynamic resources of the group have only been lightly tapped by the *Cantata No. 78*, and subsequent albums will have to show of what the Bach choristers are capable in the more massive and complex creations of contrapuntal invention and sonority. For in this the great Johann Sebastian stood—an unapproachable giant—alone.

The soloists in this album are admirable, particularly Mack Harrell, the bass soloist, whose singing of the recitative has a breadth and dignity, which immediately proclaim him America's finest male oratorio singer. Lucius Metz' tenor has good metal and his style is excellent.

It seems a pity that a piano had to be used to accompany the choral duet, *We Hasten with Feeble but Diligent Footsteps*. It sounds strangely out of place, and the harpsichord or the organ would have been greatly preferable.

The notes on the inside album-cover are sadly deficient as there is no information whatsoever on the Bach Choir of Bethlehem, its history, tradition or its present conductor. There will undoubtedly be many who will buy this album in various parts of the country, who would be glad to learn something about this remarkable band of singers.

The recording of this selection—no easy matter—is distinctly a feather in the cap of RCA Victor. Would it be perhaps too much to hope for—a recording of what many think is the greatest music ever

composed, the *Bach B Minor Mass*? An up-to-date recording of this colossal work by its most celebrated interpreter would surely be a blessing.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Porter: Begin the Beguine. One side, and **Porter: In the Still of the Night.** Fred Waring and his Pennsylvanians. 1-12" disc (D-29196). \$1.

Kern: Show Boat—Ol' Man River. One side, and **Kern: And Russia Is Her Name** (from "Song of Russia"). Fred Waring and his Pennsylvanians. 1-12" disc (D-29191). \$1.

Fred Waring's Glee Club is constantly gaining in popularity, largely because of the attractive and unusual arrangements of the selections that they sing. It is very possible that many of our readers may find the light music that they produce quite pleasing. We are therefore listing the present discs, for they are very good examples of this organization's work. There are many others for your selection, if the present ones appeal to you.

Kaleenka (Snowball Tree). One side, and **Borodin—arr. Fiveisky: Prince Igor—Galitsky's Aria.** (Sung in Russian.) General Platoff Don Cossack Chorus conducted by Nicholas Kostrukoff. 1-12" disc (V-11-9118). \$1.

Of particular interest on this disc is the aria from Borodin's *Prince Igor*, which has been especially arranged for the Don Cossack Chorus. The solo is splendidly sung by S. Slepoushkin (bass-baritone). We seem to remember that Chaliapin made a recording of this aria many years ago. *Kaleenka* is a typical Russian folk song; just the sort of selection you would expect from the Don Cossacks.

Mozart: Laudate Dominum. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Ave Maria ("Lorelei").** (Sung in Latin.) Berlin Philharmonic Choir with Orchestra conducted by Prof. Siegfried Ochs. 1-12" disc (V-C-2736). \$1.90.

This is one of the outstanding choral records of all catalogs and all times. It has not been available domestically for several years. A few copies were received in a recent shipment from England and so we are simply listing it for the benefit of those who may be interested.

VOCAL



Sing Out, Sweet Land!—Selections. Alfred Drake (tenor), Burl Ives (tenor), with chorus and orchestra conducted by Elie Siegmeister. 6-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-404. \$5.

Decca has done it again! Featuring members of the original New York production, including the stars, Alfred Drake and Burl Ives, Decca has made up a smash-hit album of selections from the Theatre Guild's musical play, "Sing Out, Sweet Land!"

As many will recall, this play attempted to tell the story of musical Americana, and, of course, to do that it had to contain ballads, work songs, dance tunes, spirituals, lullabies, blues, hymns, railroad, riverboat and mountain tunes, and a host of other ditties. Decca has chosen about a dozen and a half of these for its album, and we think the choice for the most part was a very wise one. Just to hear *Big Rock Candy Mountain*; *Frankie and Johnny*; and *Casey Jones*, as they are sung on these discs, is well worth the price of the entire set of records.

We predict that this album will have an immense sale for its appeal will be to every type of music lover. A very interesting booklet with the words of the songs that have been recorded adds greatly to the attractiveness of this set.

Handel: The Messiah—Recit.: Thy rebuke hath broken his heart; Aria: Behold and see. One side, and **Handel: The Messiah**—Recit.: He was cut off; Aria: But thou didst not leave. Webster Booth (tenor) with The City of Birmingham Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. 1-12" disc (V-C 3430). \$1.90.

Webster Booth is becoming more and more popular on this side of the Atlantic as the years go on. His many admirers in this country will certainly welcome this fine record.

These selections from Handel's *Messiah* are among the most moving in that famous oratorio and Mr. Booth sings them with a sincerity and feeling for the text that makes this disc an altogether outstanding one.

The present record is of particular interest because there is no single record containing these selections listed in our domestic catalogs. Splendid reproduction adds to its attractiveness.

American Spirituals. Kenneth Spencer (bass) with piano accompaniment. 4-10" discs in album. Sonora Set No. 478. \$2.50.

We were certainly disappointed in this album. We were rather excited when we noted that Kenneth Spencer, whom we so much enjoyed in the New York revival of *Show Boat*, had recorded a number of spirituals, but when we played the records, we lost most of our enthusiasm. Mr. Spencer's voice is fairly well recorded but the "barrel" tone of the rather insignificant piano accompaniments is nothing less than horrible.

Just as a matter of record, we will list the selections in this album: *Hear de Lambs a-Cryin'*; *Goin' to Ride in de Chariot*; *City Called Heaven*; *Water Boy*; *Every Mail Day*; *Go Down Moses*; *There's a Man Goin' Roun' Takin' Names*; *Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho*; *Black Sheep, Where You Left Yo' Lamb*; *Little David, Play on Yo' Harp*; and *Deep River*.

King's Serenade. (Hawaiian favorites composed by Charles E. King.) Hal Aloma and his Hawaiians, with descriptive introductions by Charles King. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-429. \$3.50.

There is a real need for some good Hawaiian music on records, and the music on these discs will surely please anyone who is interested, that is, if he can skip the text spoken by Mr. King at the beginning of each selection. To hear these mushy introductions, dripping with sentimentality, once, is bad enough, but to hear them every time we listen to the piece that follows is just too "mush."

By permitting this, Decca spoiled, for us at least, what might have been a very delightful little album.

Jerome Kern Selections (Memorial Album). Soloists, chorus, and orchestra conducted by Robert Trendler. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set 106. \$4.50.

Kern: Showboat—Selections. Soloists, chorus, and orchestra conducted by Robert Trendler. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set 104. \$4.50.

The Pilot Radio Corp. has decided to go into the record business. Its first two albums are listed above. Their importance to record collectors generally is that the discs are made of Vinylite, the new flexible material with an absolutely silent surface.

The selections in both albums have been recorded many times before and therefore are not novelties, but the fidelity of reproduction and the quiet surfaces of these discs are worthy of note. Next time you are in your record dealer's shop, ask him to play a couple of these records for you.

Sigmund Romberg Favorites, Vol I. Genevieve Rowe (soprano), Lillian Cornell (mezzo-soprano), Eric Mattson (tenor), Lawrence Brooks (baritone) with Sigmund Romberg and his orchestra and Victor Chorus. 4-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-1051. \$3.75.

Romberg tunes are always in demand and this album contains several of his most famous ones. They have been nicely sung by the soloists and have the benefit of a good orchestra and chorus under the direction of the composer himself. A tuneful little album that holds much enjoyment for the average music lover.

The selections chosen for this set of discs are: *Softly as in a Morning Sunrise*; *One Kiss*; *Will You Remember?*; *When I Grow Too Old to Dream*; *Romance*; *One Alone*; *Deep in My Heart*, *Dear* and *Drinking Song* (Student Prince).

Rodgers: Carousel—Soliloquy. James Melton (tenor) with Victor Orchestra conducted by David Broekman. 1-12" disc (V-11-9116). \$1.

One of the big hits from the current Broadway success, *Carousel*, is the so-called "Soliloquy," in which the hero contemplates what his unborn son will be like and during his contemplation suddenly realizes that his son might be a daughter. Hammerstein's

lyrics are at least half of this number, and so it is highly important that each word be heard and clearly understood. Thanks to James Melton's excellent diction, this is possible in this recording.

Those who have seen *Carousel* will doubtless be interested in this disc and, also, it is the type of selection that may take with the general public and become a nation-wide hit, and then again it may not. In any case, it is worth a hearing.

Kern: Show Boat—excerpts. June Clayton, Carol Bruce, Charles Fredericks, Kenneth Spencer, Collette Lyons, Helen Dowdy, with the "Show Boat" Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Edwin McArthur. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-611. \$5.85.

Columbia seized the opportunity to make a very full recording of *Show Boat* when it was revived on Broadway this year. The original cast of the revival was engaged and the attractive album just released is the very satisfactory result. The overture and nine musical numbers are included—just about everything of importance will be found nicely recorded on these records.

For a performance in your own living-room of this ever-popular nation-wide musical hit, this splendid album is highly recommended.

Dvorák: Songs My Mother Taught Me (No. 4 of Gypsy Songs, Op. 55). One side, and **Smetana: Cradle Song**. (Sung in Czech.) Jarmila Novotná (soprano) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9153). \$1.

Jarmila Novotná, Czechoslovakian-born soprano of the Metropolitan, has chosen most appropriately these two lovely songs of her fellow countrymen, Smetana and Dvorák. To say that she sings them beautifully, and with a warmth born of her native love for them, is to put it mildly. Never does Miss Novotná forget that she is singing simple little songs and let the temptation to make them operatically dramatic, as so many of her colleagues do, sway her from the simplicity that makes these selections so pleasing to listen to. We enjoyed this record thoroughly and do not hesitate to recommend it most heartily.

Romberg: The Desert Song—Excerpts. Dennis Morgan (tenor) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Edgar Roemheid. 2-10" discs in album. Columbia Set X-260. \$2.25.

The popularity of both *The Desert Song* and Dennis Morgan, who was featured so successfully in the movie version of this operetta, should be sufficient to carry this little album right along without any help from us. We'll just mention the selections it contains and let it go at that. They are: *The Desert Song*; *One Flower Grows Alone in Your Garden*; *One Alone*; and *The Riff Song*.

PIANO



Piano Music of Liszt. Gyorgy Sandor (piano). 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-602. \$4.85.

Sonata quasi Fantasia. Three sides, and *Concert Etude No. 2 in F minor* ("La Leggerezza"). (C-71715D and C-71716D.)

Funérailles (No. 7 of Harmonies poétiques et religieuses). (C-71717D.)

Liebestraum No. 3 in A flat major. One side, and *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 15* ("Rakóczy March"). (C-71718D.)

Columbia seems to be keeping Gyorgy Sandor busy these days, and it is a pleasure to hear from him frequently. This time he chose an imposing assignment, for the piano music of Liszt is not for the dilettante at the keyboard. Sandor displays his facile technique and sparkling dexterity in the F minor *Concert Etude* in a way that will cause many a person to replay that side frequently. His chromatic passages are as even as machinery, but he also has that luscious, flowing sweep that produces ingratiating music out of black printed notes. The familiar *Liebestraum* receives a musicianly performance that takes it out of the "pupils' recital" class and places it in the hands of an artist. It may not be mushy enough for some; but for those who acquire this album it will be just right. *Funérailles*, as its name would imply, has the expected morbid and sombre hues; at the same time its depth has a certain forcefulness. The longest work in this album, the *Sonata quasi Fantasia*, is painted with Liszt's inimitable brush, and contains all of the pianistic gymnastics of the greatest of the "grand manner" pianists. The *Rakóczy March* brings the album to a close in an even grander "grand manner." It would earn for Sandor the expected ovation at an actual concert.

With the exception of the *Sonata*, all of these works have been recorded previously by various artists. Detailed comparisons would be lengthy, and useless, since this is a collection and will be purchased as such. The only serious competition for Sandor is the Horowitz version of *Funérailles* (V-14515), admittedly in a class by itself. In the other selections, Sandor's merits can fairly hold their own beside the other versions. The reproduction is very faithful, and comes close to bringing a concert grand piano right in your room.

We would like to suggest for those who are interested in Liszt, the book entitled "Immortal Franz" (The Life and Loves of a Genius) by Zsolt Harsányi (Stokes, New York, 1937). This is in novel form, and anyone remotely familiar with the life of Liszt will recognize the abundance of material for a novel. It will bring deep respect and sympathy for this great man to all who read it.

S.

A Two Piano Recital. Pierre Luboshutz and Genia Nemenoff (pianos). 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1047. \$4.85.

Schumann: *Andante and Variations*, Op. 46 (four sides).

Chopin: *Rondo*, Op. 73 (two sides).

Mendelssohn: *Allegro Brilliant*, Op. 92 (Post.) (two sides).

Lovers of two-piano music will greet this one with open arms, chiefly because, for once, we have real music composed for two pianos, and not a group of transcriptions of solo piano, vocal, operatic, orchestral, organ and other music rewritten for two pianos. Each of these three numbers is most characteristic of the composer, and each has that "familiar" flavor even though heard for the first time. Any musical sophomore can guess the composer during the first dozen bars. We tried it on several friends and their score was 100%. From all of which you can gather that we have here music that is very easy to listen to. But that is not all. Luboshutz and Nemenoff have a combined technical facility that is equally delightful. Their performances are models for aspiring two-piano teams, and we will close that subject by declaring them beyond reproach.

The Schumann opus has been previously recorded by Bartlett and Robertson on Col. X-213 and the same pair recorded the Chopin *Rondo* (which in reality is an earlier work than the opus number indicates—composed when Chopin was eighteen). RCA Victor also put out a version long ago by K. U. Schnabel and Leonard Shure. Mendelssohn's *Allegro Brilliant*, one of his mature works, seems to have been neglected as far as we can ascertain. But all previous recordings mentioned, and in all probability any not mentioned, have nothing to offer that the present set cannot equal or better, particularly in reproduction. RCA Victor has achieved a smooth, dynamic, and balanced tone throughout this two-piano set. They also scored an error in labeling, for the labels on sides seven and eight are reversed—but the music is in the correct order, and that is what counts most. If you have even the faintest inclination to investigate two-piano music, don't fail to try this one first. S.

Chopin Recital. Jacob Gimpel (piano). 4-10" discs in album. Vox Set No. 604. \$3.75.

Jacob Gimpel was born in Poland and studied at the conservatory in Lwow and in Vienna. He won the Chopin prize of the famous Chopin competition in Warsaw, where Shostakovich was one of his competitors. He has appeared with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and has recently concertized throughout the United States.

Mr. Gimpel is unquestionably a student of Chopin and his performances are of the quiet refined type—no fireworks—always in the best of taste. One has the impression that he is playing for his own enjoyment

or that of a few close friends—one never feels that he is playing for the applause of a large audience. As far as we are concerned, this is all to the good.

The six selections that he has chosen for this album are well-known ones. They are: *Fantasia Impromptu* No. 4 in C sharp minor, Op. 66; *Nocturne* in E flat major, Op. 9, No. 2; *Valse* No. 7 in C sharp minor, Op. 64, No. 2; *Polonaise* No. 6 in A flat major, Op. 53, No. 6; *Etude* in C minor (Revolutionary), Op. 10, No. 12; and *Mazurka* in B flat minor, Op. 24, No. 4.

The reproduction is satisfactory and the record surfaces reasonably smooth.

ORGAN



Bach Organ Music. E. Power Biggs, playing the organ in Memorial Church, Harvard University. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1048. \$4.85.

Fugue in G minor ("Little"). One side, and *Chorale Prelude* "Ein' Feste Burg ist Unser Gott" (V-11-9145).

Fugue in C ("Fanfare"), and *Sheep May Safely Graze* (from Cantata No. 208—arr. by E. Power Biggs) (V-11-9146).

Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor (V-11-9147 and V-11-9148).

Here is a fine set of organ records. It reflects credit favorably on the composer, organist, organ, engineers, and RCA Victor. When everyone is shown off to good advantage, a musical experience is always more enjoyable and thrilling. And that is just what happens here, and it will probably add more persons to the increasing list of those interested in organ music. Many have, justifiably, felt that recordings hardly did justice to the scope and tone and spaciousness of an organ. The organ in Memorial Church is an excellent example of a contemporary church (and concert) organ, and in these records will be found the color and grandeur of the instrument. The "Fanfare" *Fugue* is capital. A recently published work, it is recorded here for the first time; and occupying less than one record side, it is a compact and exciting thing as well as an example of Bach's early output (he was in his teens when he wrote it).

The great *Passacaglia and Fugue* in C minor is one of Bach's finest organ works, and is given a forthright and just performance—not stodgy and not too erratic or showy. Biggs has given it dignity, and while observing the architecture of the work, he has still brought out all the fine points and keeps interest throughout the length of it. His registration is necessarily along broad lines, and here is where a large organ such as this one sounds magnificent. Yet this great instrument is equally admirable in the distant, ethereal measures of *Sheep May Safely Graze*, which Biggs plays with delicacy and feeling. The popular "Little" G minor *Fugue* is accorded an adequate per-

formance; and the Chorale Prelude "A Mighty Fortress," with its flashy passages, is played with bravura and élan. The entire album is pleasurable and rewarding, and carries our unqualified endorsement. S.

Gigout: Toccata in B minor. One side, and **Campra**—arr. Fox. **Rigaudon.** Virgil Fox (organ) 1-10" disc (V-10-1208). 75c.

When we say that we think that organists will be more interested in this record than the public generally, we hope that it will not cause discerning music lovers to pass this disc by without a hearing. What we mean is that the technique and style of this young organist should be of great interest to his older colleagues and we look to them for the appreciation these recordings merit. Both composers were Frenchmen, Campra (1660-1744) was one of the outstanding early French operatic composers, and Gigout (1844-1925), a talented pupil of Saint-Saëns, was an eminent organist and is well known for his several hundred compositions for his instrument. Splendid reproduction is an added feature of this outstanding little record.

Just in passing, and we hope the responsible person at RCA Victor reads this, may we ask that on the label of all organ recordings the particular instrument used be noted. It is really very important. Nearly everyone who is interested in organ recordings wants to know the organ on which the artist is playing. All imported organ recordings give this data.

VIOLIN



Heifetz playing the music of Gershwin. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with piano accompaniments by Emanuel Bay. 3-10" and 1-12" discs in album. Decca Set No. 435. \$3.75.

We whistled, too, when we read the title of this album! However, it is not such a strange combination as one would think at the first glance. George Gershwin and Jascha Heifetz were old friends. During the former's lifetime, Heifetz urged his friend to compose something for violin and piano, but Gershwin in his busy life never got around to it. After his death, Heifetz published his arrangements of the three *Preludes* and has played them many times in his recitals. Recently he has taken several selections, suitable for his instrument, from the great folk opera *Porgy and Bess* and arranged them for violin and piano. The present album includes in addition to the three *Preludes* the following: *Summer Time*; *A Woman Is a Sometime Thing*; *My Man's Gone Now*; *It Ain't Necessarily So*; *Tempo di Blues*; and *Bess, You is My Woman Now*.

In the notes that accompany this album, we learn that: "Heifetz feels very strongly that his arrangements of Gershwin's beloved music are worthy of legitimate presentation on the concert stage . . . and

completely without apologies or explanations. 'Gershwin's music is eminently capable of speaking eloquently for itself,' he says."

The words of such a great and sincere artist as Jascha Heifetz must give us pause; they must be weighed and considered. The evidence in the form of these records is available for our inspection. This is not a case of a great artist selecting some popular numbers in order to enlarge his royalty check. This has been done several times recently by some of the top artists of the Metropolitan, we are indeed very sorry to say, but we do not even hint that Heifetz ever thought of such a thing. Quite the reverse, for if he had devoted his energies to recording the music that the public might expect him to play, we are of the opinion that his royalties would be greater than from this Gershwin album. Very likely he stands to lose financially, and artistically, too, if he is not right in his contention that the present music is worthy of him.

In our opinion it is a toss-up; to really appreciate these arrangements we must divorce them from the orchestral and vocal renditions of the popular pieces that we hear, and have heard, over and over again. This is not easy to do. Heifetz is not playing some Gershwin tunes on his fiddle—he is playing his arrangements of some Gershwin melodies for violin and piano. There is a great difference. If the discerning musical public can and will see and appreciate that difference then they will take their place in the legitimate concert repertoire; if not, they will be forgotten—just a kindly gesture from a great violinist in the classical field to his friend and fellow artist in the popular field. Time will tell. R.

Kreisler Program. Fritz Kreisler (violin) with Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Donald Voorhees. 3-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-1044. \$3.

Kreisler: The Old Refrain. One side, and *Kreisler: Miniature Viennese March* (V-10-1202).

Kreisler: Rondino on a Theme by Beethoven. One side, and *Heuberger*—arr. Kreisler: *Midnight Bells* (V-10-1203).

Londonderry Air (arr. Kreisler). One side, and *Haydn*—arr. Kreisler: *Hungarian Rondo* (V-10-1204).

The beloved Kreisler has recently recorded a half dozen of the little pieces that will be forever linked with his name, and RCA Victor issues them this month in an attractive album. Mr. Kreisler plays them with his usual warmth and he has the benefit of the support of a fine orchestra under the brilliant direction of Donald Voorhees. Here is a lovely little album that will doubtless be highly prized by Kreisler's many friends and admirers.

BAND



Alexandrov — arr. Roberts: **National Anthem of U. S. S. R.** One side, and **Knipper: Cavalry of the Steppes.** Regimental Band of H. M. Grenadier Guards conducted by Lieut. F. Harris. 1-10" disc (C-DB-2143). \$1.25.

There has been a persistent demand for a good band recording of the National Anthem of U.S.S.R. In a recent shipment from England, a few copies of the present disc were received. We simply mention it here for the benefit of those who may be interested.

MISCELLANEOUS



Manhattan Tower. (Musical narrative by Gordon Jenkins.) Gordon Jenkins and his orchestra and chorus with Elliot Lewis, narrator, and Beverly Mahr, soloist. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set DA-438. \$2.50.

Gordon Jenkins, from Webster Groves, Missouri, came to New York and after two tries in the big city finally hit the jack-pot and his success there and later in Hollywood is history. At present he is the leader of the orchestra in "The Dick Haymes Show" over CBS, and for variety he also acts in the comedy sequences. To show his appreciation and love for his adopted city, he wrote *Manhattan Tower*—a musical narrative that depicts the joys and thrills of the great metropolis.

In the booklet that accompanies this set, we note the following remark: "These records should be shared with someone who loves New York—or who, never having seen it, is the kind of person who *could* love it." Read this remark over again carefully and you will have our impression of this work. It is that of a young fella from a small town who just loves the big gay city of Noo York. Perhaps this album may find some favor in Manhattan but we believe its best chances lie in Keokuk, Kankakee and way stations.

R.

Schubert: Litany. One side, and **Bach: Come, Sweet Death.** William Primrose (viola) with organ accompaniment by Vernon de Tar. 1-12" disc (V-11-9117). \$1.

Primrose's beautiful singing tone suits the somber melodies of both of these charming pieces perfectly. Vernon De Tar at the organ supplies most appropriate backgrounds for them, and we have a disc that is worthy of high praise. If you do not have a William Primrose record in your library, here is one that should be a valuable addition to your collection. The reproduction is excellent.

DICTION



No Man Is an Island. (A collection of immortal speeches on the interdependence of man.) Orson Welles (speaking). 5-12" discs in album. Decca Set No. 439. \$5.50.

For this album, Decca has selected a number of famous speeches that have come down to us through the ages, all of which stress the fact that to maintain liberty men must first consider the brotherhood of man. All men are dependent upon their brothers and all peoples are dependent upon each other. No man nor no people can successfully live unto themselves alone. In this age of confusion, it might be well for all of us to consider well the words of wisdom contained in this unique album. Orson Welles reads the various speeches with dignity and a high regard for the fruitful meaning of the texts. His voice has been faithfully recorded.

The following speeches are contained in this volume: Pericles (Greece: 430 B.C.): *The World is Their Sepulchre*; John Donne (England: 1572-1630): *For Whom the Bell Tolls*; Thomas Paine (America: 1744-1809): *Tyranny is not Easily Conquered*; Lazare Carnot (France: 1753-1823): *The New World Teaches the Old*; Patrick Henry (America: 1736-1799): *Liberty or Death*; Daniel Webster (America: 1782-1852): *Liberty and Union, Now and Forever*; John Brown (America: 1800-1859): *In Behalf of His Despised Poor*; Abraham Lincoln (America: 1808-1865): *The Gettysburg Address*; and Emile Zola (France: 1840-1902): *Truth and Justice Cost Too Dear*.

Norman Cousins, the distinguished editor of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, has prepared a most illuminating booklet to accompany these records. After a brilliant introduction, he supplies brief, but highly informative, biographical sketches of each of the great patriots whose speeches are contained in this valuable album. Mr. Cousins' text, and the postscript by Louis Untermeyer, are worthy of the deep consideration of all thoughtful persons. Read the booklet through carefully and then the Orson Welles recordings will stand out in all of their brilliant inspirational beauty.

Decca is again to be congratulated for its daring and skill in pioneering in a field in the realm of recording, that, in our opinion, is surely worth while and a distinct service to the cause of universal freedom.

R.

REMEMBER

THE RED CROSS

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BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents. Edited by Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel. Illustrated. 431 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$6.

Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death. By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

The Musical Scene. By Virgil Thomson. x + 301 + xv pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

Evenings With Music. By Syd Skolsky. 382 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co. (New York). Price \$3.

Adventures in Symphonic Music. By Edward Downes. Decorations by John O'Hara Cosgrave, II. 323 pp. Farrar & Rinehart (New York). Price \$2.50.

Florestan: The Life and Work of Robert Schumann. By Robert Haven Schauffler. xiv, 574 pp. Illustrated. Henry Holt & Co. (New York). Price \$3.75.

This Modern Music. By John Tasker Howard. 234 pp. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. (New York). Price, \$2.50.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music. George Clark Leslie, Supervising Editor. 558 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.95.

The History of Music in Performance. Frederick Dorian, with an introduction by Eugene Ormandy. 387 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$4.

Bad Boy of Music. By George Antheil. 378 pp. Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.

Duke Ellington. By Barry Ulanov. 322 pp. Illustrated. Creative Age Press, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.

The Concerto. By Abraham Veinus. 312 pp. Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.50.

What We Hear in Music. (Twelfth Revised Edition.) By Anne Shaw Faulkner. 704 pp. Illustrated RCA Victor Division (Camden, N. J.). Price \$2.25.

Men and Women Who Make Music. By David Ewen. xii + 244 pp. Illustrated. The Readers Press (New York). Price \$2.75.

The Music Goes Round. F. W. Gaisberg, 273 pp. Illustrated. The Macmillan Company (New York). Price \$3.

Composer and Critic. By Max Graf. 331 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

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By mail to any address
50c. per year

Talking Wax. By Leroy Hughbanks. 142 pp.
The Hobson Book Press (New York).
Price \$2.50.

The subtitle of Mr. Hughbanks' little book is "The Story of the Phonograph." It seems that the author has been intensely interested in the development of the phonograph since the time when he was a very small boy and a second-hand one with a couple of dozen discs was given to him. That was in 1905, and since that time he has owned numerous instruments and has collected a large library of records. His hobby seems to have been the collecting of data on the various developments of recording and of reproducing instruments from the year 1857, when Leon Scott, a French scientist, first recorded sound on a sheet of heavy paper coated with lamp black, until the present time.

Many great names in the development of the art and the commercial application of it parade through the pages of Mr. Hughbanks' book—Edison, Berliner, Johnson, and their associates of the early days make up the vanguard, with Wallerstein, Jack Kapp and Tom Joyce in the platoon of leaders of the present day.

This is in no sense a reference book. It is rather a sentimental story of the development of the phonograph written by one outside the industry. The misspelling of names well-known in the industry indicates this. However, those of us who take a very human interest in the instrument and discs that have given us so much pleasure will, we are very sure, thoroughly enjoy reading and perhaps re-reading Mr. Hughbanks' pleasing and sometimes amusing book. One of the amusing bits to us was the description of the author's visit to the recording laboratory of the Columbia Company in 1943. With almost childlike enthusiasm he describes this visit. For nearly forty years he had been wishing for an opportunity to inspect a well-

equipped recording studio, and when Mr. Wallerstein, the president of the company, personally escorted him through the studio, his joy knew no bounds.

The final pages are given over to an extensive bibliography of the phonograph. Many of the books and articles listed we have read, but there are several of seeming interest that are new to us. We appreciate very much Mr. Hughbanks' bringing them to our attention.

* * *

It will be of interest to collectors of historic recordings to know that a recent shipment from England contained a few copies of some records by Adelina Patti which this great singer made in 1905 and 1906. They are all 12" single-face discs and the price is \$4 each including tax.

It is understood that these are no longer available abroad and so this may be the last chance for collectors to secure them readily. The records that were received are listed below.

V-03051 *Le Nozze Di Figaro—Voi che sapete.*

V-03055 *Don Giovanni—Batti, batti.*

V-03056 *Faust—Jewel Song.*

V-03083 *Mignon—Connais-tu la pays?*

V-03084 *La Sonnambula—Ah non credea mirarti.*

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE. All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive* of excise tax. In ordering please add 5 per cent to list prices quoted.

ORCHESTRA



Brahms: Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68. Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 5-12" discs in album. Victor Set V-4. \$10.85.

Offenbach—trans. Stokowski: *Barcarolle* (Tales of Hoffman, Act III). One side, and **Schubert**—trans. Stokowski: *Moment Musical*. Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-12" disc (V-11-9174). \$1.

These recordings reinstate the Bowl orchestra in the Victor catalog. A number of years ago Victor had a list of records made by this venerable organization, which they said were recorded at the Bowl—out-of-doors. This time they are recorded in what we are told is a studio; but we suggest it sounds more like a convention hall, for the resonance is great enough to be considered an echo at times. This is especially true of the *Symphony*. We had the pleasure of attending a "Symphonies under the Stars" concert at the Bowl last July 29th, Stokowski conducting, and it was indeed a most enjoyable evening. The Hollywood Bowl Magazine (program booklet) announced the list of recordings to be made by RCA Victor which included all the above plus sixteen other items, some of which are most interesting and off the beaten track.

We can dismiss the single disc by saying that Stokowski's symphonic transcriptions of the numbers do them no harm, and his performances are quite tasteful and proper. They are light pieces for easy listening and will be enjoyed greatly by the multitude who wish that type of fare. Each side is about one-half filled—they could have been cut on a ten inch disc.

The *Symphony*, appearing on Red Seal De Luxe vinylite material, cannot be so easily dismissed. It must bear comparison with Toscanini's version (V-875), over which our enthusiasm ran high back in April 1942. Toscanini's performance has undoubtedly more of Brahms in it—the letter of the law is there. But dear old Stokowski is as irresistible as ever (in his best moments), and there is a warmth of feeling and the familiar indescribable quality which compels the listener to be convinced that many facets may be revealed from the same composition by different interpreters. It must be admitted that the NBC Orchestra is a better band of musicians than the Bowl group, which is not to say that the Bowl orchestra is not good; and there is no doubt that, by virtue of the Carnegie Hall acoustics, Toscanini received a better reproduction job back in 1942 than Stokowski did last year. Stokowski's orchestra is recorded with fine fidelity—and so is the reverberation.

The reviewers' nemesis is always to name a definite choice. This time we beg indulgence, for the two items are quite different, yet both are likeable. When an artist paints a picture everyone may see it and decide whether or not it appeals to him. When a symphony is written someone must first interpret it

before the general public can enjoy the composer's inspiration. And in the process of interpretation that third party can create many different illusions. Stokowski has something to say which we enjoyed immensely, and which you, fortunately, may assay for yourself. S.

Bach: Brandenburg Concertos Nos. 3 and 4. Seven sides, and **Bach**—arr. Pick-Mangiagalli: *Prelude in E* (from Violin Sonata No. 6). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1050. \$4.85.

The music on these records is indeed pretty grand. Recording and surfaces are the best we know today. This is just as well, for Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony give memorable performances of the *Brandenburg Concertos Nos. 3 and 4*, and the *Prelude in E* from *Violin Sonata No. 6* (arranged by Pick-Mangiagalli). Dr. Koussevitzky's rhythms seem so logical. He keeps the fast movements fairly bubbling along, while the delicacy and care with which he fashions the slower portions are the work of a consummate artist.

These records are said to be made at Tanglewood, Lenox, Mass. Whether they are actual performances or not hasn't been stated. Judging from the gorgeous sounds that emanate from these surfaces we would say that they were made at a special recording session, during the Tanglewood Festival. The *Prelude in E* from *Violin Sonata No. 6* was recorded in Symphony Hall, Boston.

The *Brandenburg Concerto No. 3* is for stringed instruments. It is a fine, straightforward job. Lacking an *adagio* (except for two sustained measures), Dr. Koussevitzky has here interpolated the affecting *Sinfonia* from the cantata, *Christ lag in Todesbanden*, which offers a fine contrast in the minor key. The *Brandenburg Concerto No. 4* is a more delicate piece of work and is scored for solo violin and two solo flutes against a string background. Richard Burgin is the solo violinist, while Georges Laurent and George Madsen are the flautists. Many lovely and intricate patterns are achieved. Would that all RCA Victor's recent albums had had as smooth and glassy surfaces as these.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Ibert: Escales (Ports of Call). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-263. \$2.85.

Since all album sets these days have picture covers, most of us rarely notice them. Steinweiss' cover for the present set is worthy of a second glance for its imaginative and appropriate execution and general effect—it is very clever. Worth while also is the music within the covers. *Escales* is a colorful piece of music depicting three ports of call where a ship puts in briefly for refueling and taking on food. Ibert never named which ports he had in mind, merely writing three contrasting movements. But a review of the first performance (Paris, 1924) assigned the names of the ports, and since Ibert never denied the

programmatic outline, we know these movements today as *Palermo*, *Tunis-Nefta*, and *Valencia* (the first is often entitled *Rome-Palermo*). The titles admirably fit the music and vice versa, and the idea of a Mediterranean tour suits the work as a whole. The music is gentle and easy to listen to, and while it is of the school of Ravel, with shades of Debussy, Ibert is a highly competent and skilled craftsman, whose originality is wholly sincere. There is genuine substance to his writings, and a beautiful technical finish.

The only previous recording of *Escales* was a Columbia one by Straram (X-16) which was a good exposition of the music in a thin job of reproduction. Rodzinski's impressions of *Escales* are more deeply etched than Straram's, and the present reproduction underscores this. We would not say that the newer version is lacking in subtlety; it is just made up of brighter colors and more vivid hues, and less nebulous than Straram's. The charming oboe solo in the oriental second movement is tastefully played and well reproduced. Altogether, we are mighty pleased that Columbia has made a new recording of this work available, for it deserves a greater popularity. S.

Siegmeyer: Ozark Set. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-262. \$2.85.

Always a pleasure to welcome American music, it is doubly a pleasure to welcome some good American music. And this is very American, not because of its style of composition, but rather from the sources of the music. All of the music is original melodically, but the rhythms and thematic phrases are characteristic of the Ozarks. The *Ozark Set* (or suite) is divided into four movements: Morning in the Hills, Camp Meeting, Lazy Afternoon, and Saturday Night. The first part is inclined to impress us as commonplace—much as its title. The Camp Meeting section has more to tell and does it with enthusiasm and more abandon. The third section is extremely effective in its lovely lyrical way, and employs delightful melodies woven together with finely-wrought scoring. The final movement brings the work to a splendid colorful close with incisive rhythms and the tang of country fiddlers and square dance idioms.

Elie Siegmeyer has advanced the cause of American folk music as few others have. His score for "Sing Out, Sweet Land" has been widely heralded for its combined authenticity and skill. Siegmeyer is possessed of a well-schooled musical foundation and background in America and Europe, and has travelled through this country extensively. Not yet forty years old, his accomplishments are impressive, with a greater future obviously ahead of him. We congratulate him for the present work, and Columbia for recording it. A salute, too, for Mitropoulos for his sympathetic reading of the score—he first introduced it and has replayed it often. The reproduction is of today's standard. S.

Mendelssohn: A Midsummer Night's Dream—Overture (three sides) and Wedding March (one side). BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 2-12" discs (V-DB6242 and V-DB6243). \$5.

A fine recording and a grand performance of this ever-popular Mendelssohn music! The only criticism that we might offer is that the extreme fortissimos which suddenly blare out following the very quiet passages may be a bit startling to the timid listeners. These discs were released in England during December 1945 and just arrived in a shipment from abroad. The English manufacturers seem to be doing their best to get their products to America as quickly as possible. Perhaps their production is not being held up by so many devastating strikes.

Rodgers: Carousel—Waltz. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (C-12322D). \$1.

The Rodgers-Hammerstein musical play *Carousel* has made a tremendous hit on Broadway, and the present lilting waltz that opens the show has gained much popularity with concert audiences and over the radio, where it has been heard numerous times played by famous symphonic orchestras. Fritz Reiner was one of the first major conductors to recognize its worth. We heard it for the first time when he broadcast it several weeks ago. It is not great music, but it is mighty pleasing, and we believe that a great many persons are going to get a lot of enjoyment from this fine recording of it.

Exotic Music. Andre Kostelanetz and his orchestra. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-264. \$2.85.

Anderson: *Flamingo*. One side, and Bernier: *Poinciana* ("Song of the Tree"). (C-7444M).

Rimsky-Korsakov: Sadko—*Song of India*. One side, and Scott: *Lotus Land*. (C-7445M.)

The title of this album indicates the type of music that it contains. A good subtitle might have been "Mood Music." Kostelanetz is in his element in music of this character and one could not ask for better performances. As background music for home movies it is ideal, or in a case of the jitters it should prove quite soothing. The reproduction is excellent.

Weber: Der Freischutz—Overture. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (V-11-9172). \$1.

For those who would like a stirring performance of this popular overture, this disc is heartily recommended. Toscanini puts plenty of fire into his directing, and the reproduction is of the best.

Schubert Melodies. Marek Weber and his Orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set C-109. \$2.50.

Marek Weber has taken a couple of dozen of Schubert melodies and arranged them in a medley for this set of discs. They have been tastefully arranged for his small orchestra and are played in his usual ingratiating manner. The recording is of the best.

CONCERTO



Sibelius: Concerto in D minor, Op. 47. Ginette Neveu (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind. 4-12" discs (V-DB6244 to V-DB6247) in album. Also available in automatic sequence (V-DB9007 to V-DB9010). \$10.

When we read some of the glowing reviews that appeared in England when this recording was released in January of the present year, it was hard for us to wait until this set of discs arrived from abroad. It finally arrived a few days ago and we have played it several times since, and always with greater and greater enjoyment.

Perhaps A. R., writing in *The Gramophone* (London), is a bit too enthusiastic when he says: "I do not think that there is another artist in the world today who has, in addition to the outstanding gifts of all virtuosi, such ardour and fire, such a capacity for embracing us all in the sweep of her bow." Perhaps A. R. goes a little too far in his praise, but we are prepared to state without equivocation that Miss Neveu is an artist of the first rank, and in our opinion, is certainly the greatest living woman violinist. It is to be hoped that she will be given further opportunity to record, and that her future recordings will be made available in this country promptly, for we are very sure that those music lovers who have the opportunity of hearing her present recording will certainly wish to hear more of her magnificent playing.

The first performance of this concerto in America was given by the late Maud Powell with the New York Philharmonic Society, November 30, 1906. We have no idea why this work should attract women violinists. It is certainly not feminine in any way. In fact, it is just the reverse. Perhaps opposites attract.

It was originally composed in 1903 and was rewritten during the following two years. It was first performed by Karl Halir at Berlin in 1905. It seems strange to associate Sibelius with the violin, and yet it should not be so, for he studied that instrument quite thoroughly in his student days. Of course, Sibelius uses the instrument as no other composer ever has, and with a most telling effect. He fits it into this work, which, by the way, is marked with the same rugged qualities as his symphonies, in a way that is entirely unique.

Heifetz made a glorious recording of this work with the London Philharmonic conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham about ten years ago and that album has enjoyed a steady sale ever since. If you have that version in your library, you will not probably want to add another, but if you do not have this fine work in your collection, it might be well to compare both the Heifetz and the Neveu recordings before making your choice. It is entirely possible that you may prefer the Neveu rendition.

R.

Walton: Sinfonia Concertante. Phyllis Sellick (piano) with the City of Birmingham Orchestra conducted by William Walton. Five sides, and **Walton: Death of Falstaff and Touch Her Soft Lips and Part** (incidental music to the film "Henry V"). Philharmonia String Orchestra conducted by William Walton. 3-12" discs in album (V-C-3478 to V-C-3480). Also available in automatic sequence (V-C-7635 to V-C-7637). \$5.70.

The marvelous quality of the reproduction nearly blinds one to the other tremendous assets of this work. As its name implies, we do not have here a concerto, in the usual sense of the word. The piano is more often a part of the orchestra and the orchestral tone fabric, and is fortunately recorded with this balance in mind. When the piano has its brief flashes of solo passages it can be heard quite adequately, yet still in the proper framework. The orchestra is competent, its horn section being only a bit less than perfect.

It is not always an advantage to have a composer conduct his own works; however, Walton is no novice before an orchestra, and we benefit by his direction in this case. The record labels bear the notation under the title "Revised 1943." Its original composition dates back to 1928, and it is well to remember this, lest we confuse it with Walton's later works, in which the style is somewhat different. The present work, in three short movements, has a number of biting moments in a rather modernish, Stravinsky-like, style of the "twenties." Its contrasts are sharp; but always there is the skill of a great writer, who is blessed with inspiration as well as facility. The poetic slow movement (*Andante comodo*) is especially pleasing and devoid of brashness and sparks, yet in the contemporary vein. The *Scherzando* (final) movement covers much ground on its single side, and is brimming over with playful humor. We commend this intriguing recording to those seeking byways from the beaten paths—those admirable souls who are keeping music alive.

The two brief fillers on the sixth side are choice examples of what motion picture music may be. Considering the music is for Shakespeare, it fits the occasion well, and is as charming as it is unpretentious. The Philharmonia strings have the requisite subtlety to convey the simplicity of the music.

S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 5 in A major (K. 219). Seven sides, and **Tartini—arr. Busch: Sonata No. 12 in G major, Op. 2—Air.** Adolph Busch (violin) with the Busch Chamber Players. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-609. \$4.85.

This concerto—one of the loveliest of all Mozart's creations—was recorded about 12 years ago by Jascha Heifetz and John Barbirolli. It has always been one of this reviewer's most cherished albums. Excellent as the present Columbia set is, one finds the exquisitely beautiful tone which is at Heifetz's disposal hardly compensated for by anything in the newer recording.

Despite the great difference in the date of record-

ing, there is far less disparity, technically, than one could ever suppose. Adolph Busch, excellent musician that he is, cannot produce the beautiful sounds that Heifetz does. We are not among those of the present-day school of thought, who think that form and style are all that is necessary for Mozart. That great genius' music flowers, as no one else's does, under the benign influences of beauty of sound and loveliness and delicacy of color. For these reasons we are tremendously prejudiced in favor of Heifetz's performance.

Furthermore, Barbirolli and Heifetz take the first movement at a far slower and more charming tempo (there is a difference of one and a half minutes playing time here).

Mr. Busch and his players offer a musicianly and well-considered account of the *A Major Violin Concerto*. Furthermore they are well recorded, if one discounts a certain fuzziness that occurs on each last inch of playing grooves. The surfaces are moderately good; one has the feeling that better materials than are being used are possibly now available.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: Sonata No. 7 in C minor, Op. 30 No. 2. Seven sides, and **Handel: Sonata in D major** (Peters No. 4)—*Allegro*. Isaac Stern (violin) and Alexander Zakin (piano). 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-604. \$4.85.

This album is a notable addition to the already sizeable quantity of chamber music on records. In the first place, Beethoven's ten sonatas for violin and piano occupy a distinctive place among his less massive compositions. All but the last of the violin sonatas were written between 1798 and 1803, a period when Beethoven was in one of his most inspired creative moods. The *Sonata No. 7 in C Minor, Op. 30, No. 2*, according to the French composer, Vincent d'Indy, is essentially military in style. He looks upon the second theme of the opening movement as a bugle call, and speaks of the serene second movement as a "pause between battles."

It is extremely doubtful that Beethoven had the many things in mind popularly ascribed to him, when he composed the *C Minor Sonata*. The opening movement *Allegro con brio* is dramatic and spasmodic. It is succeeded by the song-like duet of the *Adagio cantabile* (second movement). The third and shortest movement is really the sonata's *Scherzo*, despite the title *Allegro*, and the finale, also called *Allegro*, is a rollicking tune whose germs are undoubtedly found in a folk-dance.

The *C Minor Sonata* has been recorded by Busch and Serkin (V-283), and by Kreisler and Rupp (contained in one of four albums of the complete edition of the sonatas, and obtainable only on special order). A selection of artists is a matter of personal choice—all the versions are admirable.

Isaac Stern and Alexander Zakin, who are the

artists of this latest version, give a penetrating reading of Beethoven's music. On the odd side you will find the *Allegro* from Handel's *Sonata in D Major for Violin and Piano*. D.



OPERA

Wagner: Lohengrin—Bridal Chamber Scene (Act III, Scene 2). (Sung in German). Helen Traubel (soprano) and Kurt Baum (tenor) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-261. \$2.85.

Continuing its series of Wagnerian recordings with Helen Traubel, Artur Rodzinski and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York, Columbia, this month, offers the Bridal Chamber Scene from *Lohengrin*, with Kurt Baum, Czech tenor of the Metropolitan Opera Association, as Mme. Traubel's partner.

The set runs into direct competition and comparison with RCA Victor's performance, (V-897), of the same scene with Flagstad and Melchior. Truthfully, the present album comes off a bad second. Mme. Traubel's *Elsa* is overwhelmingly mature and so carefully phrased and sung. Her heroic voice is hardly the ideal instrument to suggest the virginal freshness and youthfulness of *Elsa*. Mme. Flagstad, on the other hand, with her more spontaneous and naive vocal art, is far more satisfactory in this scene. Mme. Traubel's voice sounds impressively bulky and, of course, she sings with the distinction which is invariably hers. This is not *Elsa*, however.

Kurt Baum is a definitely lyric *Lohengrin*. This is quite a possible, and, in some cases, desirable quality, but Mr. Baum somehow succeeds in making *Lohengrin* sound unimportant. He becomes, at moments, quite insignificant beside the heroic utterances of his partner. Mr. Melchior in the RCA Victor set might also be considered very heroic, but he manages to invest his music with an ardor and a passion which at least convey the dignity and fervor of the hero.

Mr. Rodzinski and the Philharmonic-Symphony of New York supply a solid and well-considered background, but the recording of the Victor set is clearer and in every way better than Columbia's present release. Mr. Baum, for one thing, often sounds muffled, especially in that heroic passage, *Hoschstes Vertru'n*, which is quite ineffective.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Verdi: La Traviata—Ah! dite alla giovine (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Licia Albanese (soprano) and Robert Merrill (baritone) with Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9175). \$1.

This famous passage from Verdi's *La Traviata*, one of the composer's most important and representative scenes, has not been recorded in almost 20 years. With some justification one might exclaim, "It's about time!" Circa 1927, Amelita Galli-Curci and Giuseppe

De Luca, those two suave exponents of the true *bel-canto* style, made a record of this duet for RCA Victor (V-8089). As far as can be ascertained, it has not been recorded (at least domestically) since.

This time Licia Albanese and Robert Merrill are the artists. It seems fitting that it should again be RCA Victor who is responsible, when one thinks back on this company's illustrious history of operatic duets, trios and quartets, and the splendid tradition, established early in the century by its *red-seal* celebrity artists.

The present disc is well recorded and excellently sung. In Licia Albanese we have a soprano, who, while making a record, is not afraid to act with her voice. This is a rare quality nowadays. Most current singers favor an oratorio or concert style in the recording studios, no matter how dramatic, despairing or impassioned the scene may be. Furthermore, Miss Albanese is the Metropolitan's most satisfactory *Violetta* since the retirement of the ever-regretted Lucrezia Bori. Her voice is clear and vibrant with emotion; her style, authentic.

Miss Albanese's *vis-a-vis* is the young American baritone, Robert Merrill. It is significant that Mr. Merrill made his Metropolitan debut as *Germont* in *Traviata* on December 15, 1945. His voice is a fresh and long-ranged baritone. The young singer does not suggest all the mellow solicitude of the old father, but his singing is at all times musical, and his lyric tone blends admirably with Miss Albanese's.

The scene is well recorded, and the orchestra under Frieder Weissmann gives excellent support. Here is an operatic record with two voices of moderate volume, which is not distorted by over-amplification—a matter for rejoicing!

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Donizetti: Favorita—A tanto amor. One side, and **Rossini: Barber of Seville**—Largo al factotum. (Sung in Italian). Mario Sammarco (baritone) with orchestra. (Re-recorded from 1904/07 disc). 1-10" disc (CRS No. 14). \$2.

Last month we mentioned three discs which were re-recorded from early records that are no longer available. As many of our readers are interested in records of historic value, we will mention them as they are released. The present one by the great Italian baritone, Mario Sammarco (1873-1930), is of particular interest. Most students of the opera have heard of him but few have ever heard him and, as only a limited number of his recordings were ever issued, few persons have examples of his great art in their collections. The *Largo al factotum* has been very faithfully captured on the present disc. The *Favorita* aria is acceptable but not as good as the Barber of Seville selection.

Humperdinck: Hänsel und Gretel—Grand Potpourri. (Sung in German). Operatic ensemble and orchestra. 1-12" disc (RFR7048). \$2.

Lovers of Humperdinck's fascinating little opera, *Hänsel und Gretel*, will certainly welcome this disc

which contains some very splendidly sung excerpts from it. They have been well recorded. We are not sure, but we rather think that the present disc is a repressing of a Telefunken record which was available in this country before the war. In that case, the soloists are from the Berlin Opera and the accompanying orchestra is the Berlin Philharmonic.

CHORAL



Catholic Hymns. St. Mary's Seminary Choir, Roland Park, Baltimore, Md., directed by Rev. John C. Selner, S.S., D.D., with Joseph I. Brennan (tenor) and John H. Olivier (organist). 4-10" discs in album. Gregorian Institute album 1-H. \$5.

These are by far the most satisfactory recordings that we have heard of Catholic hymns. There is surely a large market waiting for such an album. The hymns have been carefully chosen and their renditions have been meticulously rehearsed by Father Selner before they were recorded. The choir is an excellent one and the appropriate organ accompaniments by Mr. Olivier add to the charm of these fine recordings.

The hymns in this collection are: *Jesus, My Lord, My God, My All; Soul of My Saviour; Ave Maria, O Maiden, O Mother; Hail, Holy Queen, Enthroned Above; Jesus, By That Shuddering Dread; O God of Loveliness; O Sacred Head; and Alleluia, Alleluia, Let the Holy Anthem Rise.*

VOCAL



Herbert: The Red Mill—Excerpts. Mary Martha Briney (soprano), Donald Dame (tenor), Earl Wrightson (baritone), the Mullen Sisters, Mixed Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Al Goodman. 4-10" discs in album. Victor Set K-1 (automatic sequence). \$4.

Inspired by the success of the revival of *The Red Mill* in New York, Decca, several months ago, brought out an album containing six selections from this ever-popular Herbert operetta. It received a royal welcome. Now Victor brings out an elaborate album with eight selections, and bound in the album are a number of pages in color with pictures from the show and an abbreviated text of the dialogue, that takes place between the musical numbers, with a description of the action. This feature has been very successfully accomplished by Victor and, with the album before you, and the records playing on your phonograph, you can very easily imagine that you have "two on the aisle in the sixth row" for a bang-up performance of *The Red Mill*.

Both the Decca and Victor artists are well equipped for their tasks and there is little choice between the two versions. The Victor set contains more selections and has the advantage of the text, etc., mentioned

above. However, the Victor set is a dollar or so more expensive.

The selections in the present set are: *The Isle of Our Dreams*; *In Old New York*; *When You're Pretty and the World Is Fair*; *Moonbeams*; *Every Day Is Ladies' Day With Me*; *I Want You to Marry Me*; *Because You're You*; and *Wedding Bells*.

"Two Sisters from Boston" (and other selections). Lauritz Melchior (tenor), with Nadine Connor (soprano) and chorus and orchestra conducted by Charles Previn. 3-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-1056. \$3.

Victor was quick to take advantage of the current popularity of M-G-M's film, "Two Sisters from Boston," in which Lauritz Melchior is featured, thus the present album. It contains the two operatic sequences from the picture *My Country* and *Marie Antoinette*. These occupy four record sides, and on the remaining two sides will be found fine renditions of Earl Robinson's *The House I Live In* and the *Serenade* from Romberg's ever-popular "The Student Prince," both sung by Mr. Melchior with chorus.

We might bemoan the fact that Melchior has devoted his time to make such recordings when there are so many finer things that he might have recorded; but we are living in a new age, and thousands upon thousands of persons are hearing this great artist who never before heard such a voice, and it is only fair that they should have renditions of music that they can enjoy and appreciate. Through this album, many of these persons will have an opportunity of hearing again and again the music which thrilled them so greatly when they witnessed the picture. With this in mind, we must congratulate Victor upon making it available so promptly and for the fine job of recording that has been accomplished.

Levitzi: Do You Remember? (Op. 9). One side, and **Edwards: Into the Night.** (Sung in English.) Ezio Pinza (bass) with piano accompaniment by Gibner King. 1-10" disc (C-17378D). 75c.

Tosti: Serenata. One side, and **Tosti: L'Ultima Canzone.** (Sung in Italian.) Ezio Pinza (bass) with piano accompaniment by Gibner King. 1-10" disc. (C-71687D). \$1.

Pinza, who is unquestionably one of the most popular operatic and radio artists, offers four pleasing selections on these two discs. Two of the songs are sung in English and two in Italian.

We strongly feel that this great artist deserves an adequate orchestra to accompany him. The piano accompaniments on these records sound rather tinkling. This is especially noticeable in the Tosti selections. One is reminded of the earliest Caruso recordings, which all had piano accompaniments.

We doubt if these discs will enjoy the sales that they might have enjoyed if Columbia had supplied Mr. Pinza with an adequate orchestra.

Spirituals. Paul Robeson (bass-baritone) with piano accompaniments by Lawrence Brown. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-610. \$3.75.

C-17379-D Go Down Moses.
Balm in Gilead.

C-17380-D By an' By.
Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child.

C-17381-D John Henry.
Water Boy.

C-17382-D Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen.
Joshua Fit de Battle of Jericho.

When Paul Robeson makes an album of spirituals, there is little to say except to mention the titles. We have done that, and all that we can add is that his accompanist, the very talented Lawrence Brown, joins him in singing two of the selections, *By an' By* and *Joshua Fit de Battle*. This is a pleasing and appropriate added attraction. The reproduction is of the best.

Roustabout Songs. (A collection of Ohio River Valley Songs). Conrad Thibault (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-451. \$2.75.

The present album contains a collection of Ohio River Valley Songs. The collection was made by Mary Wheeler and the musical arrangements are by W. J. Reddick. These are the songs that the roustabouts sang on the docks during the days when the traffic of the whole Ohio valley was carried by the boats that plied that great river. They are, for the most part, work songs.

Conrad Thibault, who is known to most record buyers because of the great variety of his recordings, has done a fine job with these earthy folk songs. Decca has seen to it that they have been well recorded with a good orchestra directed by Lehman Engel.

A very interesting booklet accompanies this album with a fine foreword by the late Irvin Cobb. The words of each song and illuminating notes are included in this booklet.

Schumann: Der Nussbaum, Op. 25, No. 3. One side, and **Schumann: Stille Tränen, Op. 35, No. 10.** (Sung in German.) Marian Anderson (contralto) with piano accompaniments by Franz Rupp. 1-12" disc (V-11-9173). \$1.

Miss Anderson's new recording of *Der Nussbaum* (she made a recording of this song a number of years ago for Victor), a selection that often appears on her programs, will be of interest to her many new friends, who may not have the older rendition. Of interest to all who love fine lieder will be her superb recording of *Stille Tränen*, a beautiful Schumann song that is not so well known as *Der Nussbaum*, and one that is not adequately represented in the recorded music repertory. Those who really appreciate fine vocal records should not miss the opportunity of hearing this one.

Wedding Tunes. The Wagner and the Mendelssohn *Wedding Marches* played on the Master Cathedral Organ; and *O Promise Me; Because; I Love You Truly*; and *O Perfect Love* sung by Earl Rogers (tenor) with organ accompaniment. 3-10" discs in album. Bibletone Set W. \$3.50.

Bibletone issues this album just in time for the June brides. For the home wedding, this album contains just the music that is needed—both wedding marches played on the organ and four of the most popular nuptial songs sung very nicely by Mr. Rogers with organ accompaniments. The reproduction throughout is very good and the surfaces of the discs are pleasingly quiet.

Lute Song—Selections. Mary Martin (soprano) with Lute Song Orchestra conducted by Raymond Scott. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-445. \$2.75.

The *Lute Song*, an unusual musical play, with music by Raymond Scott, has had a reasonably successful run on Broadway. It appeals to those who like productions with an oriental flavor. We hardly think that the average audience would enjoy and appreciate it. We rather feel the same way about the average record buyer. As a souvenir of the performance, this album is ideal, but further than that we don't feel that it will have any great appeal. Better listen to this one before you buy it.

PIANO



Rachmaninoff Recital. Jakob Gimpel (piano). 3-10" discs in album. Vox Set No. 608. \$3.75.

Last month there was released the first album of recordings by the Polish pianist, Jacob Gimpel. It contained a number of short Chopin pieces and was listed as "Chopin Recital." It met with a hearty response from the record-buying public and it would seem that thus many persons will be anxious to hear this second album.

In the second album, Mr. Gimpel turns his attention to Rachmaninoff and plays in addition to four preludes (C sharp minor, Op. 3, No. 2; G sharp minor, Op. 32, No. 12; G minor, Op. 23, No. 5; and G major, Op. 32, No. 5), excerpts from the famous Second Piano Concerto and the piano part from *Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra on a Theme by Paganini*.

Most music lovers who heard Mr. Gimpel's first album felt that he is indeed a master of Chopin music. We wonder how they will feel about his renditions of Rachmaninoff? We think that they are highly satisfactory. The piano reproduction is good and the surfaces of the discs reasonably smooth.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents. Edited by Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel. Illustrated. 431 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$6.

Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death. By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

Listening to the Orchestra. By Kitty Barne. 299 pp. Illustrated. The Bobbs-Merrill Company (Indianapolis). Price \$2.75.

Evenings With Music. By Syd Skolsky. 382 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co. (New York). Price \$3.

Adventures in Symphonic Music. By Edward Downes. Decorations by John O'Hara Cosgrave, II. 323 pp. Farrar & Rinehart (New York). Price \$2.50.

Florestan: The Life and Work of Robert Schumann. By Robert Haven Schauflier. xiv, 574 pp. Illustrated. Henry Holt & Co. (New York). Price \$3.75.

This Modern Music. By John Tasker Howard. 234 pp. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. (New York). Price, \$2.50.

Bad Boy of Music. By George Antheil. 378 pp. Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Aech, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musicaft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofonken, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

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Letters of Composers. An Anthology 1603-1945. Compiled and edited by Gertrude Norman and Miriam Lubell Shrifte. xviii + 422 + xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

There is a huge amount of interesting information in these 224 letters by ninety-nine composers from Jan Sweelinck, who wrote from Amsterdam in 1603, to Roy Harris, writing from Colorado Springs in 1945. While there is a detailed table of contents and a twenty-page index, it is not easy, in fact it is next to impossible, to quickly find any particular fact that you may want at the moment. This is no fault of the editors; it is inherent in any such collection of letters. This is the type of book that one should pick up in his spare time and note for himself any facts that are of especial interest. All of the letters will not be of interest to all readers, many of them will be worth reading several times and some of them may be passed over rather hurriedly. It is for the individual reader to make his choice. There is, however, such a vast amount of matter in this volume, that most anyone who is interested in music, will find enough and more to warrant his perusal of it.

Naturally some composers write more interestingly than others and certain letters hold important information while others, although pleasingly written, have little value. It is the responsibility of the editors to select the letters that are worthy of inclusion. We are very happy to say that Miss Norman and Miss Shrifte have used excellent judgment in the choice of material for their volume. It includes many important letters in the field of music, and from them one may gain a wide appreciation of the development of this art as it appeared to those who actually were responsible for its growth through the ages.

Such a volume, as the present one, deserves a prominent place in any library of books of musical value.

* * *

Impresario. A memoir by S. Hurok in collaboration with Ruth Goode. 291 pp. Illustrated. Random House (New York). Price \$3.

Those of us who have been attending concerts and performances of the ballet for years naturally are familiar with "S. Hurok presents." Thus most of us will be interested in the career of this unusual man whose name has been linked with some of the most important artists of our time. Chaliapin, Pavlova, Isadora Duncan, Marian Anderson, Argentinita, Artur Rubinstein and many others have appeared under his management. His stories of his experiences with these diverse artistic personalities make highly interesting reading.

Mr. Hurok was born in Pogor in the South Ukraine and came to America as a young man to seek his fortune. His first experiences in the field of management came in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn where he arranged concerts, most of them benefits for the Socialist Party, which was then (1907) taking a hold in that thickly populated district. His first really important concert was given when he persuaded the young violinist, Efrem Zimbalist, to appear in Brownsville and to donate a part of his usual fee to the Party treasury. The concert was a great success and from then on no artist was too big or too important for Mr. Hurok to go after. Many of his experiences are quite amusing and some of them are not without a touch of pathos.

All in all this book is pretty much a lively gossip column studded with artistic personalities grouped around the one and only S. Hurok.

* * *

Several of our readers have written us recently suggesting that the manufacturers of records print the list price of all album sets on the inside cover of the album. They point out that in many stores albums are displayed so that the customer may select the items that he is interested in without the help of a salesman, and that this very desirable arrangement is largely defeated by the fact that the customer has to carry the sets he has selected to the salesman in order to find out their prices. They call our attention to the fact that book publishers have always clearly priced their books and that one may browse in a book store without bothering a salesman until he has finally made his selection.

We can see no reason why the manufacturers of records cannot follow the procedure of the book publishers, and as we think of it, we wonder why they haven't thought of this and acted on it years ago. Of course, the list price should *not* include the federal excise tax, which may be lowered or abandoned at any time.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of **THE NEW RECORDS**. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

* * *

IMPORTANT NOTICE. All prices quoted in **THE NEW RECORDS** are list prices *exclusive* of excise tax. In ordering please add 5 per cent to list prices quoted.

ORCHESTRA



Prokofieff: Romeo and Juliet—Suite No. 2, Op. 64. Moscow State Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Serge Prokofieff. Eleven sides, and **Prokofieff: Alexander Nevsky—Russian People Arise.** State Theatre Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Prof. Orlov. 6–12" discs in album (in automatic sequence). Disc Set No. 754. \$14.25.

These records are vinylite, and the recording was done in the Soviet Union. Whether or not they are direct pressings from imported stampers, or dubbings

we cannot ascertain. Most of the sides are very quiet as to surface noise. Some of the sides are not bad as to recorded quality; but some of them have a peculiar "recorded" timbre. All in all the recording is adequate, and conveys the music sufficiently for a complete appreciation of it. However, the Russians have not perfected the recording technique of American, English, and German recorders. Considering the paramount importance of this work, we would not let the recording prevent us from acquiring this album—we dwell on the technical angle only to inform the reader that he will not receive the brilliance and realistic definition he does from our best domestic sets (in spite of the price of the album).

As for the musical content—that is our primary consideration. Composed in 1935 for a ballet at the Bolshoi Theatre, the music from Prokofieff's *Romeo and Juliet* was arranged into two symphonic suites by the composer in the following year. A third suite has been (or is being) arranged from more of the material not used in the previous two. All this we gather from the notes supplied with the set. The present suite is in seven sections, the titles of which are familiar to anyone acquainted with Shakespeare's celebrated love story, on which the ballet is based. These seven titles are: I—Montagues and Capulets; II—Juliet, the Maiden; III—Friar Lawrence; IV—Dance; V—The Parting of Romeo and Juliet; VI—Dance of the West Indian Slave Girls; VII—Romeo and Juliet's Grave. Such devices as the Dance (IV), which is inserted to contrast and provide relief from the programmatic material which surrounds it, is all to the good. Prokofieff has gone on record as saying that he took special pains to achieve a simplicity which he hoped would reach the hearts of his listeners, and that he would be very sorry if they found no melody and emotion in the work. He need not feel sorry for us, for we found much of interest melodically speaking, and found the emotional aspects of the story well underscored. Parts of it seemed to be tinted with the style of Shostakovich, and bits of the material are trite—such as the Dance of the West Indian Slave Girls (VI). But the opening section is quite captivating and cannot miss fire with any audience, and sections V and VII have a breadth and texture which convey the anguish and other emotional content indeed well. If you have any affinity to contemporary music, this music is tailor-made for you.

S.

Alfvén: Midsummer Vigil, Op. 19 (A Swedish Rhapsody). Three sides, and **Alfvén: Elegy** (from "Gustav Adolf II"). Stockholm Concert Association Orchestra conducted by Nils Grevillius. 2–12" discs (V-C-3482 and V-C-3483). \$1.90 each.

This pair of discs was re-pressed by RCA Victor and released as album set M-788 in July, 1941. However, it only remained in the catalog for a short time and then was withdrawn. Since its withdrawal there has been some demand for these records, and as a few copies of them arrived in a recent shipment from

abroad, we are listing them for the benefit of any of our readers who may be interested.

Not since Grieg has there been a composer so characteristically Scandinavian as Hugo Alfvén. The rhythmic and melodic qualities of this *Swedish Rhapsody* are so clearly and simply expressed that they seem almost exaggerated. Indeed, Alfvén's skill gives an identity to Scandinavian music of such strength as to be comparable to that of the Irish jig.

Alfvén's competence is manifest, however, in his ability to combine these peasant-like, folk-tune characteristics with an orchestral and technical proficiency that results in a finished product definitely symphonic in character. The excellent performance is well recorded.

Delius—arr. Beecham: *The Walk to the Paradise Garden*. The Hallé Orchestra conducted by John Barbirolli. 1-12" disc (V-C-3484). \$1.90.

Since we read in the March, 1946, issue of *The Gramophone* (London) the following statement that W. R. A. made in his review of this disc: "A truly charming piece of recording, tasteful in every way. I have not enjoyed a record more for a long time," we have been very anxious to hear it. A few copies arrived in a recent shipment from England and we lost no time in playing it. It is all that W. R. A. says that it is, and we are sure that it will receive a hearty welcome from the discerning record collectors on this side of the Atlantic.

As most persons know, *The Walk to the Paradise Garden* is the orchestral interlude between scenes five and six in Delius' musical lyric drama "A Village Romeo and Juliet." The young lovers are returning from the Fair, where gossips have attached scandal to their names, and they are proceeding to Paradise Garden, an inn located on a river bank. They board a barge and sail down the river to their deaths which they accomplish by deliberately scuttling the boat. Their coming doom is portrayed in the interlude, and the touching pathos, which always rings absolutely true, lends a charm that is irresistible.

As usual, the English recorders have achieved nearly perfect reproduction. R.

Provost: Intermezzo (Souvenir of Vienna). One side, and **Barroso**—arr. Gould: *Brazil*. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-10" disc (V-10-1219). 75c.

The ever-popular *Intermezzo* from the film of the same name makes very pleasing fare for the Boston "Pops." Morton Gould's arrangement of *Brazil* is a quite acceptable double. Here is a little disc that should enjoy a wide sale.

Sousa: Semper Fidelis. One side, and **Lehár: Gold and Silver Waltz**. Sigmund Romberg and his orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-11-9221). \$1.

Two old stand-bys nicely played with plenty of spirit by an adequate orchestra under the brilliant direction of Sigmund Romberg. Reproduction of the best is an added feature.

Esquire's All American Hot Jazz (1946 Award Winners). Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Johnny Hodges, "Red" Norvo, and others. 2-12" discs in album. Victor Set HJ-8. \$3.

Readers of *Esquire* are aware that that magazine has been championing the cause of jazz for a number of years. Each year *Esquire* has a panel of hot jazz experts pick the "Jazz Musicians of the Year," and RCA Victor has here recorded a sample of the playing of this year's winners.

This group has the same faults as any other "all-star" swing group: the musicians, singly, are great men; but since the men have seldom played together and since they have different styles, collectively the results are a trifle disappointing.

The best of the four sides is *Long Long Journey*, featuring Louis Armstrong (trumpet and vocal), Johnny Hodges (alto sax), and Duke Ellington (piano). The reverse, *Snafu*, is the only other side featuring Armstrong, who steals the entire session even though Hodges comes in a close second.

The One That Got Away is marred by the immature trumpet of Neil Hefti, although Hodges and Don Byas (tenor sax) do much to save the record. "Red" Norvo offers here some pleasing improvisation on the vibraharp. *Gone With the Wind*, on the other side, is a slow number, with Hodges coming through magnificently.

The rhythm section is entirely adequate on all four sides, with Sonny Greer (drums), Remo Palmieri (guitar), "Chubby" Jackson (bass), and Ellington and Billy Strayhorn alternating on piano. The recording and acoustics are good, and the reproduction is fine. The set is recommended to "modern jazz" fans and to Armstrong fans who are looking for Louis in a "good mood," something found all too seldom any more. JR.

Rozsa: Lost Weekend. One side, and **Shannon: Missouri Waltz**. Al Goodman and his orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-46-0000). \$1.

Rozsa's music for the Paramount picture "The Lost Weekend" is given a most glowing performance by Al Goodman and his orchestra with the aid of the brilliant young pianist Vladimir Sokoloff and the able violinist Irving Prager. In fact, the music is made to sound perhaps a bit more important than it really is. The reverse side contains President Truman's favorite piece with the vocal part crooned by The Mullen Sisters.

We notice that Mr. Goodman has been promoted to a new record series (46-0000), 12-inch black label disc at \$1. If this record is worth a dollar, certainly Mr. Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony is worth three. Our point is, that either this disc is over-priced or records of such orchestras as the Boston Symphony are much under-priced. Surely there should be some price differential between recordings of Mr. Goodman's band and the leading symphony orchestras of the country.

Music of Fritz Kreisler. Andre Kostelanetz and his orchestra. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-614. \$3.85.

Caprice Viennois, Op. 2. One side, and *Tambourin Chinois*, Op. 3. (C-7446M).

The Old Refrain. One side, and *Stars in My Eyes* (from "The King Steps Out"). (C-7447M).

Liebesleid ("Love's Sorrow"). One side, and *Liebesfreud* ("Love's Joy"). (C-7448M).

Sometime ago, Kostelanetz, a great friend of Kreisler's, upon the beloved violinist and composer's recovery from a severe automobile accident, gave a special radio program consisting of Kreisler compositions only. It was a great success, and since that time there has been a consistent demand for recordings of some of the numbers by Kostelanetz and his orchestra. Here they are, and they are grand indeed.

They sound like works of love and doubtless are, and they certainly do not need the build-up that we have given them. All they need is to be heard. All of the music is familiar and is just the type that anyone may enjoy. It has been most beautifully played and brilliantly recorded. Here is an album that should, and very likely will, enjoy a tremendous sale.

Sousa: Stars and Stripes Forever. One side, and **J. Strauss, Jr.: Tritsch-Tratsch Polka.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (V-11-9188). \$1.

One never knows what Maestro Toscanini is going to record next. The old gentleman was certainly in a gay mood when he turned his attention to these two lively pieces, for he surely gives them the works. If grandpa is visiting you and he says that he would like to hear a little music with some zip in it, put this disc on for him, and if he keeps his foot still, he is older than you think he is.

Tchaikovsky—trans. Stokowski: Solitude, Op. 73, No. 6. One side, and **Tchaikovsky—trans. Stokowski: Humoresque.** Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-12" disc (V-11-9187). \$1.

Stokowski has transcribed these two Tchaikovsky selections and handles them with loving care in the recordings on this disc. They are not of great importance, although they are quite pleasing to listen to, and the Hollywood Bowl Symphony sounds like the very fine organization that it really is. Reproduction—excellent.

Spellbound. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Miklos Rozsa. 4-10" discs in album. ARA Set A-2. \$3.75.

The music that Miklos Rozsa composed for Alfred Hitchcock's amazing picture *Spellbound* has created quite a furor and thus this album containing a large part of the score played under the direction of the composer is of more than usual interest. It is mood

music at its best, and while for a full enjoyment of it one should have seen the picture, yet it has quite a fascinating effect all by itself. We are sorry to report that the reproduction is not up to present day standards—at times it sounds as if these records had been dubbed from the sound track of the film. Perhaps some other company will record this music, but until a better recording is available, those who are interested will have to be satisfied with this rather mediocre job.

Elgar: Serenade in E minor for Strings, Op. 20.

Three sides, and **Elgar: Contrasts, Op. 10, No. 3.**

London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Edward Elgar. 2-12" discs (V-DB2132 and V-DB2133). \$2.50 each.

The first copies of these discs came from England over ten years ago and at that time they created very little stir. In fact, they were pretty generally forgotten, and it was only recently that a renewed interest in Elgar in America resulted in some calls for them. A few copies were received in a recent shipment from abroad and so we are listing them for the benefit of any of our readers who may be interested.

Sibelius: Karelia Suite, Op. 11—Intermezzo, and Alla Marcia. One side each. BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (V-DB6248). \$2.50.

We are very sure that Sir Thomas' many friends in America will welcome the opportunity of adding this superb disc to their collections. It was recently released in England and just arrived in a shipment from overseas.

Sir Thomas is in fine form; the excellent British reproduction and the smooth surfaces of the disc make this an item that should not be overlooked by the discerning collector.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: Salzburg Serenades. Concertante and Rondo, K. 320. Four sides, and *Serenade No. 6 in D major, K. 239* ("Serenata Notturna"). Vox Chamber Orchestra conducted by Edvard Fendler. 4-10" discs in album (in automatic sequence). Vox Set No. 161. \$4.75.

Here is an example of enterprise, good intention, and a measure of success by an independent record company. We always have an enthusiastic welcome for some fine music of the masters which has been unearthed and brought to light. Fendler is a capable fellow with a nice background. He has currently conducted some of the Carnegie Hall "Pops" Concerts in New York City. He has made recordings before and conducted in six countries, receiving the "Grand Prix du Disque" in France—for one of his Mozart recordings.

The *Concertante and Rondo* was originally a part of Mozart's "Posthorn" *Serenade in D major*

(K. 320) and has never before been recorded. It is a little concerto for solo woodwinds, with stringed instruments and horn accompaniment; the *Rondo* theme is re-introduced by various instruments. The *Serenade No. 6 in D major* has had a few previous recordings, none of which are listed currently in domestic catalogs. Here Mozart split the orchestra in half, giving the effect of two small separate orchestras playing in unison and in contrast. One group is scored for two violins, violas, and double bass; the other for 1st and 2d violins, violas, cellos, and timpani. It is in three movements: March, Minuet and Trio, and Rondo. All of the music in this album is lovely and completely beyond any further comment or description. Just hear it and enjoy it, listen and love it.

The recording was made in a studio, beyond doubt, and when played it gives the impression that the Vox Chamber Orchestra is in the room with you. There is no resonance whatever, and for those who desire spaciousness and bounce in their reproduction, this set will be a trifle disappointing. But chamber music can be more intimate if the echo is absent. We would have preferred a little more life to the recorded sound. The surfaces are shiny and satisfactory, and the performances good. More of this sort of thing, Vox, please. S.

Prokofieff: Overture on Hebrew Themes, Op. 34.

William Nowinski and George Ockner (violins), Bernard Milofsky (viola), Milton Forstat (cello), David Weber (clarinet), Vivian Rivkin (piano). 1-12" disc (DI-4020). \$2.25.

In making available a recording of Prokofieff's *Overture on Hebrew Themes*, the Disc Company of America, a small independent record publisher, has done something that is entirely worth while, and something that such a company can do very well—in fact, just as well as any publisher could do, large or small. Disc has done a real service to the music loving public, and we hope that the sales of this record will be large enough to warrant further efforts in making available recordings of compositions of important composers which have been overlooked by the big companies.

The present work was composed by Prokofieff while he was living in the Bronx and dates from 1919. It is said that he based his opus upon music which he heard at a Jewish concert, and that he completed the composition in less than a couple of weeks. It is written for string quartet, clarinet, and piano, and is just what one would expect from its title—a series of themes in minor keys with the oriental tang that is typical of so much Hebrew music. If music of this character appeals to you, we are sure that you will delight in this lovely work.

A group of fine artists were selected for this recording headed by the brilliant young violinist, William Nowinski, and the well-known concert pianist, Vivian Rivkin. One has the feeling that a

real spirit of camaraderie exists amongst the players, which makes for an ideal performance. Excellent reproduction has been attained, and the recording has been stamped on the new silent unbreakable vinylite material. R.



OPERA

Purcell: Dido and Aeneas (complete recording).

(Sung in English). Isobel Baillie, Joan Hammond, Joan Fullerton, Edna Hobson, Sylvia Patriss (sopranos); Edith Coates, Gladys Ripley (contraltos); Trefor Jones (tenor); Dennis Noble (baritone); Boris Ord (harpsichord); Philharmonia String Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Constant Lambert. 7-12" discs (V-C-3471 to V-C-3477) in album. (Also available in automatic sequence V-C-7628 to V-C-7634). \$13.30.

Copies of HMV's complete recording of England's greatest operatic masterpiece—Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*—have arrived in the latest shipment of records from England.

It is perfectly obvious that this latest arrival is one of the greatest importance. Performances of *Dido and Aeneas* are as scarce as hen's teeth, being relegated in this country, apparently, to productions in small colleges, mostly in the western part of the United States. The Metropolitan Opera Association and important operatic organizations in Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco and Cincinnati have not yet seen fit to stage any kind of a performance of what is undoubtedly the operatic jewel of our Anglo-Saxon musical heritage.

Therefore it was with great interest that we listened to this dignified and painstakingly complete recorded performance of Purcell's masterpiece issued through the auspices of the British Council. The orchestra under the knowledgeable leadership of Constant Lambert comes through with first honors, for, despite the evident good-will of the cast assembled, none of the singers are likely to send one into an ecstasy of joy. The orchestra is beautifully recorded and from its deeply felt *Overture* to the final pages of accompaniment to *Dido's* death song *When I Am Laid in Earth*, its contribution is the outstanding one in the album.

Among the singers Joan Hammond is an uneven *Dido*, lacking the classic nobility of line and feeling to bring out all the majesty of the role. Isobel Baillie's flute-like tones are well suited to the music of *Belinda*. Had her name not appeared on the labels, one might readily have thought that a boy soprano were singing the music. This is the type of voice much admired among our English cousins, and a type which suits Purcell's style admirably.

Dennis Noble's *Aeneas* suffers from the same lack of nobility of line that mars Miss Hammond's *Dido*. Edith Coates, in the dramatic role of the *Sorceress*, characterizes her lines well, but her voice is anything

but a pleasant one to listen to. The other singers are adequate but little more. It is a pity that music which is so signally distinguished could not have enjoyed the benefits of a truly distinguished treatment. To illustrate the point, we urge our readers to listen to a few of the records from Gluck's *Orpheus* sung by Alice Raveau, the great contralto of the Paris Opera Comique. Listening to this colossal talent will make our point quite clear.

The chorus sings fairly well, but suffers from some muddy recording. The *Echo chorus and dance of the Furies* is exceedingly effective, but the *Laughing Chorus* could have been more trenchantly caught.

Surfaces are so free from any noise or slight blemish that we wonder how England, besieged by years of war and lack of materials, is able to give us such unerringly glassy surfaces. The increasing frequency of appearance of these British records must make some of our home-grown organizations feel rather uncomfortable. If it doesn't, it should.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Wagner: Lohengrin—Elsa's Dream. (Sung in German). Helen Traubel (soprano) with Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (C-12321D). \$1.

Just why Helen Traubel and Columbia have seen fit to present a new recording of *Elsa's Traum* from *Lohengrin*, when Mme. Traubel has already made a fine recording of this passage for RCA Victor (V-16345), is hard to fathom.

Maybe the singer was dissatisfied with her earlier recording, though playing them side by side, the differences are not too marked. Furthermore the present record has the disadvantage of being spread over two record sides, a practice which is not too alluring with arias that one has been used, from time immemorial, to hearing on a single surface.

True enough the new device enables Rodzinski and the Philharmonic Symphony of New York to get in some extra orchestral measures before the actual entrance of *Elsa's* voice, but these measures are not of major importance, and having to turn the record over while the aria is in full swing sets the balance against this trifling gain.

Elsa's Traum has been one of the most frequently recorded passages in all Wagner from the early records by Emma Juch, Aino Ackte and Nellie Melba, through the many artists who followed them to the present release. Mme. Traubel sings the aria very beautifully, with less volume but more vocal finish and authority than she employed on her Victor recording. The mystic quality of *Elsa's* character, of the visionary beset by enemies, eludes here just the way it does in the theater. For our money, the two most satisfactory recordings of *Elsa's Traum* are the ones by Elisabeth Rethberg and Kirsten Flagstad. They are probably not so well or sonorously recorded as the singer on the present disc.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Rossini: Il Barbiere di Siviglia—Se il mio nome saper (Serenata, Act I, Scene I). One side, and **Donizetti: L'Elixir d'Amore**—Quanto e bella! (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Alessandro Bonci (tenor) with piano accompaniment. 1-10" disc (Aria 39687/62123), re-recorded from original record. \$2.

These selections by the great Italian tenor Alessandro Bonci were probably re-recorded from Fonotipia recordings made in Milan between 1906 and 1908. It is interesting to note how well his fine lyric tenor voice sounds when re-recorded on the new Vinylite unbreakable material. For those persons who are making collections of artists of the "Golden Age of Song," the present disc is very highly recommended.

CHORAL



Thompson: The Testament of Freedom (A Setting of Four Passages from the Writings of Thomas Jefferson). Boston Symphony Orchestra with the Harvard Glee Club conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1054. \$3.85.

The impression this music would convey upon hearing it in a direct performance in a music hall may be entirely different from what we gather through this recording. Our remarks are based entirely on the recording, which is unfortunately not well achieved. Technically it is a poor job, and it has spoiled any favorable opinion which we would like to have formed. The work is scored for a male chorus and full symphony orchestra, and virtually all of it is sung, there being very few orchestral passages. In this case the chorus should be prominent and the words easily understood, with the orchestra being evident but in the background rather than on top, or in front, of the chorus. It sounds as though a microphone were placed in the middle of Symphony Hall and the music played, with the results recorded as they came forth. Here is where Studio 8-H and a dozen microphones would have come in handy. To be sure, there are passages where you can hear every word; but there are more passages where everything is churned up like marble cake.

Whether a composer should take a poem, or any set of words, texts or speeches and set them to music to be sung by soloists, or chorus, or spoken with instrumental accompaniment, or whether he should write abstract instrumental music to convey the *thought* of the text, is entirely his business and for him to decide. But whether or not he is successful in his choice is usually the public's prerogative. As part of the public, we do not consider Randall Thompson successful, from what we gather from this recording. The text is taken from the writings of Thomas Jefferson, and the writings selected are: "A Summary View of the Rights of British America";

"Declaration of Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms"; and "Letter to John Adams, Monticello." They have been divided into four sections which take their titles from the opening words of the texts: 1—The God Who Gave Us Life; 2—We Have Counted the Cost; 3—We Fight Not for Glory; 4—I Shall Not Die Without a Hope. The texts, printed on the inside album cover, read well and reveal again the greatness of Jefferson. But setting such prose to music is something different from setting a poem or a Psalm or a short sacred text or a secular lyric to music. Primarily, Jefferson's words should be read, or heard spoken. Such involved prose is hardly suitable to musical setting regardless of the composer's skill or his good intentions. A possible exception would be if they were rendered in recitative, with choral sections repeated for emphasis, or if they were rendered in speech rhythm chanting. But in the present set-up, they are out of their element.

G. Wallace Woodworth has obviously drilled the Harvard boys well, and Koussevitzky attacks this music as a labor of love, with a possible eye to patriotic flavor. The music itself is direct, not repetitious, well constructed, and original—and we wish we could like it.

S.

The Turtle Dove (Folk Song arr. R. Vaughan Williams). One side, and **Far Away** (London-derry Air arr. Jozé) and **Roberton: The Old Woman**. Glasgow Orpheus Choir conducted by Sir Hugh Roberton. 1-12" disc (V-C-3463). \$1.90.

This is the first time that Americans generally may have the opportunity of hearing the famous Glasgow Orpheus Choir. It is directed in these recordings, as it has been for so many years, by the venerable Sir Hugh, who is now in his seventy-second year. All of the selections are in a folk song vein and are just the sort of pieces that most anyone may enjoy. They have been handled most gently and the nostalgic flavor of the renditions cannot help touching the hearts of those who have a bit of sentiment in their make-up. The reproduction is superb.

Dykes: Jesu, Lover of My Soul. One side, and **Dykes: Eternal Father, Strong to Save**. Westminster Central Hall Choir conducted by Arthur Meale, with organ accompaniment by Arthur L. Harris. 1-10" disc (V-B-2951). \$1.35.

The feature of this imported record is the fine rendition of the great Navy hymn *Eternal Father, Strong to Save*, which our midshipmen at the Naval Academy at Annapolis sing while kneeling at each Sunday morning religious service. The tune, while a very beautiful one, of *Jesus, Lover of My Soul*, is not the one that is most familiar in this country. For those who are making a collection of recordings of great English choirs this disc is highly recommended.

Mendelssohn: Hymn of Praise, Op. 52—I waited for the Lord. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Elijah, Op. 70**—O come, everyone that thirsteth. Choir of the Temple Church, London, accompanied by G. Thalben Ball, organist and choir director. 1-12" disc (V-C-1398). \$1.90.

This disc has been in the HMV catalog for several years but has not been available in this country since before the war. It contains two especially fine recordings, and as there is a wide demand for records by the Temple Church, we are listing it at this time.

The soloists in these selections are Master E. Lough (soprano) and Master R. Mallett (alto).

O Queen of Heavenly Majesty. One side, and **To Jesus Heart All Burning**. 1-10" disc (NCS-1073). \$1.25.

Holy God, We Praise Thy Name. One side, and **Ave Maris Stella**. 1-10" disc (NCS-1076). \$1.25.

Montani: Ave Maria. One side, and **Yon: Requiem Mass—Offertory**. 1-10" disc (NCS-1081). \$1.25.

All of the above recorded by Holy Name College Choir (Franciscan House of Studies, Washington, D. C.) directed by Father Claude Kean, O.F.M.

The Holy Name College Choir, under the distinguished direction of Father Kean, has rendered these selections that will be so dear to the hearts of all devout Catholics, in a most reverent manner and with a fine regard for the holy texts. The choir, containing many excellent voices, shows careful training and produces ensemble singing of high calibre. The reproduction, while not of the best, is satisfactory.

VOCAL



Call Me Mister. Members of the Original Cast with chorus and orchestra under direction of Lehman Engel. 5-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-466. \$4.50.

Call Me Mister, the show about GI's becoming ex-GI's, by GI's, is packing them in on Broadway, and is one of the present smash hits. We can understand why, because we saw it when it opened in Philadelphia. For what it is supposed to be it is tops, but that does not mean that an album of selections from it will enjoy wide popularity. As a souvenir of the show, it has a very definite appeal, but when you take the show away from it, there is not enough left to make it particularly attractive. The music is just so-so, and the texts of the songs without the action are not clever enough to hold. In other words, this album is for those who have seen the show and can add their memories to what it contains. A booklet containing the words of the songs, which is included in the album, will be a help to your memory.

O'Hara: There Is No Death. One side, and **Huhn: Invictus.** Richard Crooks (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 1-10" disc (V-10-1216). 75c.

Mr. Crooks sings both of these popular selections with much spirit and a fine regard for the thrilling texts, but the recording technicians have over-amplified both of them to the point where it is next to impossible to play them without blasting. In doing this, one has a false impression of the power of the singer's voice. This was a fault that was prevalent in the early days of electrical recording but fortunately it occurs only occasionally now. It is too bad that it had to happen in this instance for, otherwise, this would have been a very fine disc and one that should have had a wide appeal.

Sweet and Naughty—Barber Shop Melodies. Dana Harmonizers (vocal quartet) with piano accompaniment. 3-10" discs in album. Harmonia Set HR-7. \$3.

These songs are sweetly sung in the true "Barber Shop" style, but they are certainly not naughty. Why the title "Sweet and Naughty," unless it refers to the fact that most of the selections were popular in the so-called "Naughty Nineties," we wouldn't know.

As there are very few recordings available of real "Barber Shop" harmony, it would seem that the present album might fill a very definite demand. Although this demand may be quite small, it is surely vociferous. The selections included in this album are: *Coney Island Baby; You Tell Me Your Dream; Daisy Bell; Bicycle Built for Two; I've Been Workin' on the Railroad; The Band Played On; and There Is a Tavern in the Town.*

Gershwin: Porgy and Bess—Summertime. One side, and **Carmichael: Star Dust.** Eleanor Steber (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Jay Blackton. 1-12" disc (V-11-9186). \$1.

Miss Steber gives outstanding renditions of both of these selections and the support of the orchestra under Jay Blackton is superb. For these reasons this disc may be acceptable to the average music lover, but we still think that Miss Steber might have used her talents to better advantage. There are plenty of good recordings of *Summertime* available, and the popular tune *Star Dust* hardly rates the care and effort this fine artist has given it.

Jimmy Durante. Jimmy Durante (vocal) with orchestra conducted by Roy Barge. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-442. \$3.75.

The inimitable Jimmy Durante has selected a few of his songs and gags, and with the aid of Eddie Jackson and "Six Hits and a Miss," he has recorded them for this Decca album. His many fans will doubtless welcome the opportunity of acquiring this unique Jimmy Durante souvenir. It's all in fun, and will bring many smiles from his friends from coast to coast.

Melichar: Longing Violins, Tender Songs. One side, and **Melichar: Today Is the Most Beautiful Day in My Life.** (Sung in German.) Erna Sack (soprano) with symphony orchestra. 1-10" disc (RF-R8227). \$1.25.

Ponce: Estrellita. One side, and **Marchesi: La Folletta** (Sung in German.) Erna Sack (soprano) with orchestra. 1-10" disc (RF-R8228). \$1.25.

Denza: Funiculi Funicula. One side, and **Pestalozza: Ciribiribin.** Erna Sack with orchestra accompaniment. 1-10" disc (RF-R8083). \$1.25.

Our Nightingale (A suite of beautiful melodies). Erna Sack (soprano) with chorus and orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R7047). \$2.

NOTE: The records listed above are standard shellac pressings. Those following are pressed on the new vinylite material.

J. Strauss: Die Fledermaus—Mein Herr Marquis (Act II) and **Spiel' ich die Unschuld vom Lande** (Act III). (One side, each.) Erna Sack (soprano) with Philharmonic Orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70045). \$2.50.

Strauss, J.: Voices of Spring. One side, and **Strauss, J.—arr. Weniger: The Lilacs Are Blooming in Sievering** (from "The Dancer Fanny Eissler"). (Sung in German.) Erna Sack (soprano) with Philharmonic Orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70026). \$2.50.

Lehar: Paganini—Nobody Loves You as Much as I. One side, and **Zeller: Der Vogelhaendler—Roses Blossom in Tyrol.** (Sung in German.) Erna Sack (soprano), Marcel Wittrisch (tenor), mixed chorus, and orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70040). \$2.50.

Strauss, J.: Emperor Waltz. Erna Sack with orchestra accompaniment. 1-12" disc (RF-R70046). \$2.50.

Kapeller: Just Once I was Topsy. One side, and **Lincke: Glow Worm Serenade.** (Sung in German.) Erna Sack (soprano), with chorus and orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70037). \$2.50.

It has been a long time since Erna Sack records have been generally available, and so we are listing the ones that may be presently secured. Most of them have been reviewed in previous issues of THE NEW RECORDS. You will note that several of them are now available in vinylite pressings at a slightly advanced price. We feel that they are well worth the additional cost.

Just a word or two about Miss Sack for the benefit of some of our newer readers who may not know of the great German coloratura soprano. Erna Sack is well known throughout Europe, where she made her debut at the Charlottenburg Opera. Her first American recital was given in New York in 1937; this was followed by a successful tour of the United States. Miss Sack has a voice of great range and tremendous power; her high notes are crystal clear, and she has the ability of keeping them always right on the key. Her voice is unique in its field and should be of particular interest to students.

Harrison: In the Gloaming. One side, and **Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes** (Old English Air). Robert Merrill (baritone) with orchestra conducted by H. Leopold Spitalny. 1-10" disc (V-10-1218). 75c.

The brilliant young American baritone, Robert Merrill, who has just closed a most successful season with the Metropolitan, offers these two old favorites in renditions that are bound to please the vast majority of music lovers. A satisfactory orchestra under the able direction of H. Leopold Spitalny gives splendid support to the soloist. The reproduction is excellent.

Gershwin: Porgy and Bess—Selections. Orchestra conducted by Robert Trendler, with vocalists and chorus. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set No. 103. \$4.50.

Selections from George Gershwin. Orchestra conducted by Robert Trendler, with vocalists and chorus. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set No. 105. \$4.50.

These two new Pilotone albums with their Vinylite (non-breakable) records contain many important Gershwin selections. The *Porgy and Bess* album includes the following numbers from that popular musical play: *It Ain't Necessarily So*; *I Got Plenty o' Nuttin'*; *Summertime*; *Oh Lawd, I'm On My Way*; *My Man's Gone Now*; *A Woman Is a Sometime Thing*; *Bess, You Is My Woman Now*; and *Leaving for the Promised Land*.

The other album contains the following Gershwin pieces: *Someone to Watch Over Me*; *Somebody Loves Me*; *They Can't Take That Away From Me*; *Embraceable You*; *Bidin' My Time*; *The Man I Love*; *Of Thee I Sing*; and *Song of the Flame*.

For those persons who would like some Gershwin music nicely recorded on non-breakable records with smooth silent surfaces, these albums are highly recommended.

Carib Song—excerpts. Baldwin Bergersen and ensemble; vocals by William Archibald. 3-10" discs in album. International Records Set 11. \$3.50.

Last fall, there appeared on the New York stage a musical play that was praised very highly by the critics but did not take hold with the public and after a month or so it closed. The book and lyrics were by William Archibald and the music by Baldwin Bergersen. It was based on the folklore and traditional melodies of Trinidad, and, as Mr. Archibald is a native of that romantic island, it has the real tang of the Caribbeian. Several of the songs were quite unique and it was thought that a sufficient number of persons would be interested in them to warrant recording them. The composer assembled a small group of musicians and Mr. Archibald agreed to supply the vocals, and thus this album came into being. Mr. Archibald has a pleasing voice and his diction is such that the words of these unusual songs are easily understood. The

melodies have an exotic flavor which is quite fascinating. The broad humor of some of the songs does not recommend them for mixed audiences.

Hudson Valley Ballads. Sung by Frank Warner with banjo and guitar accompaniments. 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 611. \$3.

Frank Warner has done a marvelous job in collecting these interesting ballads during an extensive trip up the Hudson into northern New York. His wife took down the words and he copied the music in his notebook as the ballads were sung to them by the natives in remote sections of that country. In some cases, they used a recording machine which they carried with them. The texts of the songs and notes concerning them will be found on the inside covers of this album.

If Mr. Warner's renditions were nearly so good as the ballads themselves, all would be fine; but, unfortunately, they are not. His voice, which approaches a monotone, becomes pretty monotonous, and his diction is such that without the text before you these interesting songs would be meaningless. Our suggestion is to let Mr. Warner collect the ballads and then let Burl Ives sing them.

Calypso. Songs by Lord Invader and Lord Beginner, with Felix and his Internationals. 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 614. \$3.

There seems to always be a certain demand for new Calypso songs. During the last decade, increasing numbers of Americans have been visiting the West Indies and have there heard these weird songs that tell such curious stories. The best of the Calypso singers have come to New York and there have recorded their more popular numbers.

The present set consists of six songs and the words of each song are printed on the inside cover of the album. This is a great help because without these texts it would be rather difficult to comprehend the humor of these ditties, although goodness knows it is broad enough.

All of the songs in this album are fairly amusing. The two that struck us most forcibly were *Tied-Tongue Baby* and *Always Marry a Pretty Woman*.

Negro Folk Songs. Sung by Lead Belly. 3-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 660. \$5.

The famous Huddie Ledbetter, better known as Lead Belly, who has been in and out of jails all over the country, has recently recorded a group of Negro folk songs. All sorts of songs are included in this collection—Work Songs, Spirituals, Country Dances, etc.

A page or two might be given to a full description of this unique album, but space does not permit. Those who know Lead Belly and appreciate his unusual style will want to investigate this album. However, just a word of warning to the uninitiated—these songs are right down to earth and a spade is called a spade in most of them.

Ballads from the Dust Bowl. Sung by Woody Guthrie. 3-10" discs in album. Disc album No. 610. \$3.

Woody Guthrie, who was born in the Dust Bowl, has travelled the length and breadth of the land singing these songs which he has made up from time to time. For the most part, they extol the virtues of the migratory workers and dwell on the hardships they have been forced to endure. Mr. Guthrie supplies his own accompaniments on his famous "guitar." The words of each of the songs are printed on the inside cover of this album. Those who are interested in ballads of this character will doubtless find the present collection highly satisfactory.

Love Songs. Richard Dyer-Bennet (tenor) with guitar accompaniments. 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 609. \$3.

Richard Dyer Bennet, who is well known to record collectors for his many recordings of traditional songs, has chosen a group of "love songs" for this rather unique album. Most of them are in the first person singular and tell of an amorous adventure—they are, however, in no sense bawdy. The majority of the songs in this little collection stem from the British Isles and date from the early 18th century.

Mr. Bennet, as usual, supplies his own very interesting accompaniments upon his famous guitar. The reproduction throughout is excellent.

Russian Hit Parade. Harry Horlick and his orchestra, with vocals in English by Bob Hannon (tenor). 3-10" discs in album. Crown Set No. 5. \$3.50.

Harry Horlick has chosen a few Russian popular songs of the day and has fitted English vocals to them and presents them in this album. Bob Hannon, the singing star of "Waltz Time" over NBC, was selected to sing these melodies. They are all pleasing enough, but whether they will appeal to the average American is very much of a question. The bit of not too subtle propaganda contained in Mr. Horlick's notes that accompany these discs may or may not help you in your appreciation of them.

America's Favorite Songs. Bess Lomax, Butch Hawes, Pete Seeger, and Tom Glazer (instrumental and vocal). 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 607. \$3.

The folks who make these records both sing and play. The appropriate accompaniments consist of a quartet, of two guitars, a mandolin, and a banjo. The title of this album seems a bit misleading—we would hardly say that these were America's favorite songs—they are just a half-dozen well-known hill-billy ditties. In praise, we might say that they are sung in character and will doubtless please those who go in for such music. The diction in every case is excellent so that it is hardly necessary to refer to the words of the songs which are printed on the inside cover of the album.

The songs included in this collection are: *Down in the Valley*; *Casey Jones*; *Go Tell Aunt Nancy*; *The Cowboy's Lament*; *Buffalo Gals*; and *Careless Love*.

PIANO



Grieg: Album Leaf in A, Op. 28, No. 3. One side, and **Grieg: Berceuse, Op. 38, No. 1.** Harold Bauer (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1217). 75c.

Two lovely little Grieg pieces that are not represented in the catalogs with adequate recordings will be found on this pleasing disc. They have been played most beautifully by that fine artist, Harold Bauer. We are certainly glad to welcome his new recordings after a lapse of so many years.

Chopin: Waltz in A flat major, Op. 42. One side, and **Liszt: Concert Etude No. 2 in F minor ("La Leggerezza").** Simon Barere (piano). 1-12" disc (V-DB2166). \$2.50.

For those who would like to have a recording of the celebrated pianist, Simon Barere, in their collection, the present disc is highly recommended. Both selections are well-known and are played in Mr. Barere's most fascinating style. The reproduction is of the best.

VIOLIN



Elgar: Salut d'Amour, Op. 12. One side, and **Debussy: La fille aux cheveux de lin.** Yehudi Menuhin (violin) with piano accompaniment by Adolph Baller. 1-10" disc (V-10-1220). 75c.

There is nothing startling about this little disc containing two selections that are well-known to most music lovers. Menuhin plays them in a most acceptable manner and the reproduction is highly satisfactory. If you would like a couple of pleasing tunes played by a great artist, here they are.

CHILDREN



Mozart—His Story and His Music. Jose Ferrer (speaking) with Eugene Morgan (baritone) and symphony orchestra conducted by Max Goberman. 3-10" discs in album. Vox Set No. 251. \$3.75.

This album is the first in a series, whose purpose is to introduce great composers and their music to children. In addition to the present volume there will be others featuring Schubert, Beethoven, Haydn, et al.

The idea is a very clever one. The distinguished actor, Jose Ferrer, tells the story of Mozart's life in a series of interesting episodes, and in each episode there is introduced an appropriate bit of the composer's music. From time to time the selections are played on various instruments, which are named in the story, so that the children learn the sound of the different instruments without being aware of it. A complete list of the selections played are listed on the cover of the album so that if the children like

any particular piece, a full recording of it may be obtained for their further enjoyment and study. We surely feel that after a child has listened to these discs, he will certainly always remember something of Mozart and his music.

With all the aids that are presently available, no child should grow up without at least a nodding acquaintance with the great masters in the field of music. Certainly they should not be as musically ignorant as the children who grew up in our generation at the turn of the century. There were few phonographs and no radio in those days.

Songs of Safety. Frank Luther (baritone) with sound effects and accompaniment by Harry Bruer and his orchestra. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-443. \$2.

One of the most popular of all sets of records for children is the present one which Decca issued several years ago. It was originally a set of three discs in an envelope; now an attractive album with a picture of a policeman on the cover takes the place of the fragile envelope.

These simple but pleasing little songs, that Frank Luther sings with so much meaning, urge children to avoid a great variety of accidents. There is a warning jingle for nearly every childish activity—playing ball, skating, swimming, bicycling, and many, many others. It is our guess that by listening to these records through but once, the average child will learn more safety rules than could possibly be taught by the most earnest parent in repeated warnings.



DICTION

Franklin D. Roosevelt's First Inaugural Address. 2-12" discs in album. Union Set No. 201. \$5.

For those who would like to have a recording of Mr. Roosevelt's first inaugural address delivered in Washington on March 4, 1933, Union Records has issued it on two non-breakable 12-inch records in an album with the former president's picture on the cover. This doubtless is an item that persons interested in making a collection of historic recordings will wish to add to their libraries. Faithful reproduction has been nicely achieved and the smooth surfaces of these plastic discs is an added important feature.

D-DAY. Broadcast from the English Channel by George Hicks. 2-10" discs in album. Crown Set No. 7. \$3.50.

This pair of discs contains a transcription of real historic value—a recording of excerpts from the broadcast made by George Hicks aboard an American ship in the English Channel on the evening of "D-Day," June 6, 1944. It was one of the most important and realistic broadcasts made during the

entire war, and it is worthy of being preserved. Crown has done this very nicely by making it available on the new non-breakable Vinylite records housed in an attractive album.

The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám. Ralph Bellamy (speaking) with musical background by Victor Chamber Orchestra conducted by Macklin Marrow. 2-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1055. \$3.

For those who remember Ralph Bellamy's splendid recording of selections from Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (M-955), the present album will hold much anticipated enjoyment, and we are very sure that they will not be disappointed, for it is indeed a fine accomplishment.

Mr. Bellamy has chosen some ninety-odd quatrains from the celebrated *Rubáiyát* and arranged them in his own order, presumably to attain better continuity and dramatic effect. We are sure that lovers of these priceless gems of wit and philosophy will find the arrangement and the reading highly satisfactory. The musical background supplied by the orchestra under the direction of Macklin Marrow adds greatly to the charm of these readings.

The text as spoken by Mr. Bellamy will be found on a flyleaf inserted in the album.

Poems from Charles Peguy. (Spoken in French). French actors speaking in unison. 3-12" discs in album. Disc Set F-54. \$5.

The present unique album contains recordings of poems by Charles Peguy, made by a group of French actors, who came to Burgundy during the German occupation and recorded these selections in the Cathedral of Beaune. The group was directed by Jacques Copeau and Pierre Schaeffer and the purpose was to keep alive in the minds of its members the spirit and soul of free France. As one listens to these voices, often sounded in unison, one feels a certain religious ecstasy, and senses that indomitable will and faith that held fast in the hearts of all true Frenchmen until the day of liberation came.

The three Peguy poems included in this album are: *Priere de confidence*; *Priere de residence*; and *Presentation de la beauce a Notre Dame de Chartres*. A booklet giving the French texts and English translations is included in this unusual album.

Voices of Victory. Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston S. Churchill (two sides each). 2-10" discs (WOR 5-5100 and WOR 8-3641) in folder. \$1.75.

The Roosevelt record in this folder was issued separately and was reviewed in the July, 1945, issue of THE NEW RECORDS. Now a similar record containing several important quotations from the speeches of Winston Churchill has been made available, and the two discs have been issued in an attractive folder containing pictures of Mr. Roosevelt and Mr.

Churchill, with appropriate notes on the recordings. The reproduction has been faithfully accomplished and there is no mistaking the famous voices that were such a consolation and an inspiration in the dreadful years of World War II.

ORGAN



Hymns of Christian Glory. Played on the Cathedral Organ. 4-10" discs in album. Bibletone Set M. \$4.50.

With this album is a hymnal containing the words and music of each of the hymns. We presume that it is intended that these records may be used as accompaniments in homes or in small chapels where an accompanist is not available.

The selections in this album are: *Beneath the Cross; Fight the Good Fight; Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken; O Jesus, I Have Promised; All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name; Love Divine All Love Excelling; Holy, Holy, Holy; and Faith of Our Fathers.*

MISCELLANEOUS



Lounging Music Concert. Michael Forman (violin), Marti Michel (piano), and Marie Corbett (organ). 3-12" discs in album (manual sequence). Stinson Set No. 462. \$3.50.

Strauss: *The Blue Danube.*

Chopin: *Polonaise No. 3 in A major, Op. 40, No. 1.*

Addinsell: *Warsaw Concerto.*

We don't know just what a "Lounging Music Concert" is. As we played these discs, we were reminded of an out-of-the-way French restaurant that we used to frequent many years ago. In addition to a piano there was a small organ and occasionally a violinist would come in and we would have some such music as we found on these records. We did not consider ourselves "loungers," but we certainly enjoyed it.

We doubt if many persons will be interested in this album—we would not have had much interest in it, if it did not bring back some pleasant memories. The artists who have made these recordings are all top-notch, especially the pianist, Marti Michel, who seems to be the leader of the ensemble. The reproduction is excellent, and the surfaces of the discs are particularly smooth.

BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents. Edited by Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel. Illustrated. 431 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$6.

Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death. By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

Listening to the Orchestra. By Kitty Barne. 299 pp. Illustrated. The Bobbs-Merrill Company (Indianapolis). Price \$2.75.

Listening to Music Creatively. By Edwin J. Stringham. xx + 479 pp. Illustrated. Prentice-Hall, Inc. (New York.) Price \$5.

Talking Wax. By Leroy Hughbanks. 142 pp. The Hobson Book Press (New York). Price \$2.50.

Florestan: The Life and Work of Robert Schumann. By Robert Haven Schauffler. xiv, 574 pp. Illustrated. Henry Holt & Co. (New York). Price \$3.75.

This Modern Music. By John Tasker Howard. 234 pp. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. (New York). Price, \$2.50.

Bad Boy of Music. By George Antheil. 378 pp. Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Aseh, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Dise, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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50c. per year

The Borzoi Book of Ballets. By Grace Robert.
xvii+362+xxiii pp. Illustrated. Alfred
A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.50.

Most opera enthusiasts know *The Victor Book of the Opera*, with its stories of the various operas and fine illustrations of scenes from most of them. Miss Robert's elaborate volume will be of like interest to those who attend the ballet or those who are making a collection of recordings of the music of the more famous ones.

The Borzoi Book of Ballets contains the stories of over sixty ballets, most of which are in the present repertory. Usually the date of the first performance is given, together with the first performance in America, and the casts of either or both. Over thirty fine photographs of artists and scenes from the ballets add greatly to the attractiveness of this fine book. A short introduction, giving the history of the rising growth of the ballet in popularity with the American public, precedes the main body of the text, which is given over to the detailed stories of the various ballets, following this is a glossary of ballet terms and a most complete index.

Miss Robert's book has been well planned and beautifully produced by the publisher. We do not hesitate to recommend it to that ever-growing group who so faithfully support the ballet, which, a couple of decades ago, was practically unknown in America.

* * *

Sergei Prokofiev: His Musical Life. By Israel V. Nestyev. Translated from the Russian by Rose Prokofieva. Introduction by Sergei Eisenstein. xxvii+193+xiv pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

Unquestionably Prokofiev is one of the most important living composers, and yet, while his works are continually performed in America

and are well-known to all music lovers, comparatively little is known of this fine artist's life. The present volume fills a great need, for it covers his history in considerable detail. However, it moves right along and is certainly a very readable biography. A complete list of his works to date and a comprehensive index make this volume of value as a reference book.

It is interesting to note that Prokofiev was well-established in the world of music in both Europe and America before he returned to the U.S.S.R., in the early thirties, to take up his work there. He apparently likes life in the Soviet Union, and his biographer does not hesitate to point out the advantages the U.S.S.R. offers to her creative artists.

Israel V. Nestyev was born in the Crimea in 1911 and after studying music at the conservatories in Thilisi and Moscow devoted his efforts to journalism. He did considerable research in the field of Russian music and his first major work was a monograph on Prokofiev. From 1941 to 1945 he was a correspondent with the Red Army. At present he is chief editor of the music administration of the Radio Committee of the U.S.S.R. Young Mr. Nestyev is well-qualified for the task he has undertaken in this full-length biography of one of the Soviet's most important creative artists. Music lovers generally will feel that he has done an excellent job we are very sure.

* * *

The amazing recordings made by the late Florence Foster Jenkins have been in great demand throughout the country and many of her fans will be interested in a little booklet containing "An Appreciation" by Milton Bendiner and a full-length portrait of Mme. Jenkins, wings and all, which has recently been published. Of more than passing interest are the quotations from numerous critics that have cov-

ered Mme. Jenkins' unique Carnegie Hall concerts. These and a complete list of her recordings follow Mr. Bendiner's essay. This booklet is published by The Melotone Recording Studio (New York), who gave to the world the famous Florence Foster Jenkins records. The price is \$1 (postpaid throughout the world).

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IMPORTANT NOTICE. All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive of excise tax*. In ordering please add 5 per cent to list prices quoted.

ORCHESTRA



Brahms: Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-621. \$5.85.

Nothing but the highest superlatives are in order for this remarkable interpretation. Here is one performance of a thrice-familiar, too-oft recorded work over which we can really wax enthusiastic, for it backs the rest of them "off the map." Rodzinski's reading is definitely "straight" and devoid of mannerisms, and in the face of this he comes through with a sensitive, thrilling performance that bears endless repetition with pleasure. His handling of the last movement is a model of conducting. This is the movement which mars Toscanini's otherwise fine rendition.

The Brahms *First Symphony* has for a number of years been winning a majority of the popularity polls for the favorite symphony. It has been recorded any number of times and is played very frequently at concerts and over the air. Under such conditions, many of us draw a deep breath when another disc version appears. But this superb reading is worthy of permanent recorded form any day. Reams have been written about the *First*, and one can only remark that this monumental work has stood the test of time and worn well. Now that Columbia has done it full justice, will they kindly issue an equally fine recording of the *Liebeslieder Walzer*?

In all fairness to the prospective purchaser of this set, we would mention that generally the reproduction is full, rich, and resonant. But several sides of the review set were not without a slightly higher surface noise than we are accustomed to these days. A first playing revealed a glassy tone occasionally, particularly near the center of the discs; but repeated playings cleared up nearly all of this. Columbia records usually need the ministrations of steel or chromium needles for a few rounds. The Stokowski recording of the Brahms *First Symphony* released two months ago by RCA Victor on vinylite is somewhat better mechanically than this; but his reading is one to be heard first, before acquiring, as it is rather individual in spots. The Rodzinski one is beyond caviar, and will wear well.

S.

Copland: A Lincoln Portrait. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski with Kenneth Spencer (narrator). 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-266. \$2.85.

Aaron Copland's *A Lincoln Portrait* is an impressive and sincere piece of work. It is not as good as the composer's *Appalachian Spring*, where everything, with the exception of the spoken passages, has been more brilliantly and concisely said by Mr. Copland. The music of these two pieces sounds strangely similar. We suppose that the fact that both *Lincoln* and *A Spring in the Appalachians* are thoroughly American subjects accounts for this noticeable sameness in color and mood.

Andre Kostelanetz suggested to Mr. Copland in January, 1942, that he write a musical portrait of a great American. He went further and commissioned such a piece, promising that he would give it frequent performance. Mr. Copland decided that he would write a portrait of Lincoln, but that the stature of the Great Emancipator was so great, he could only hope to accomplish his task by quoting from the text of Lincoln's speeches and employing a speaker.

With this in mind, the work was completed and its first performance occurred at Cincinnati, when the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra under Andre Kostelanetz (to whom the work is dedicated) played it on May 14, 1942. It has since been widely performed both in this country and in South America.

The music has the spaciousness and dignity that are inherent in Aaron Copland's best scores. It is not music of any overwhelming depth or importance, but it in no way slights its great subject. Even with the Negro actor, Kenneth Spencer's impressive voice employed in Lincoln's utterances, one cannot quite escape the fact that Copland was more or less driven to this device from necessity rather than any deep inner compulsion. The spoken word against the orchestral background is evocative, but it also has the slight tinge of being a "device" arbitrarily employed.

The recording is unusually good, and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York under the direction of its conductor, Artur Rodzinski, does well by Mr. Copland's score.

D.

Respighi: The Pines of Rome. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-616. \$3.85.

A new recording of *The Pines of Rome* is indeed a welcome addition to the repertoire. All existing versions were deficient in one thing or another, especially reproduction equal to the dimensions of the music. The present set is superbly reproduced on nice surfaces, and Ormandy's reading encompasses the score completely.

The Pines of Rome is the second of Respighi's three symphonic poems about Rome. It is in four sections, the third of which contains the voice of a nightingale. Respighi wanted the sound of a real nightingale and indicated in the score the use of a phonograph record.

The critics at the first performances all had something to talk about because of that "radical" departure from orchestral scoring. Ernest Newman was quite incensed, and concluded by suggesting "we may live to see the evening when the Pastoral Symphony will be given with real running water in the slow movement, nightingale by the Gramophone Company, quail by Messrs. Fortnum and Mason." He could probably lay out some interesting specifications for the Shostakovich Seventh Symphony too.

The nightingale notwithstanding, the music today sounds conventional enough. It is scored for a large orchestra, and much of it is opulent fare; but as a whole it is well balanced with many lovely lyrical passages. Nearly all of the newer record collectors who are beginning to look beyond Beethoven and Tchaikovsky symphonies will find this work congenial and wholly enjoyable. We suggest they do not get discouraged with the first record side, for the opening measures are a bit awkward and hard—the suite soon settles down to very listenable music. Others who have been awaiting a new recording of this work will be highly pleased with this one, we are sure. S.

Wagner: Siegfried Idyll. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-265. \$2.85.

A new recording of the *Siegfried Idyll* is not at this time superfluous. While many have been made, few are currently available, and none of them are very good. The present set is reproduced quite well, with reasonably quiet surfaces. The interpretation stands up favorably beside other recent versions, although it often lacks the indescribable qualities of the Walter reading on black-label Victor records which will in all probability never again be pressed. As usual the old Vienna Philharmonic sounded uniquely fine. Other monumental interpretations were by Muck on early electric Victor records and an old Brunswick recording by Klemperer. But these must all be relegated to the past era of records, and many of the present collectors will never hear interpretations comparable to those of that school of German conductors. Toscanini started the fad for brilliance and speed which has tainted the readings of numerous conductors, as well as his own readings of many scores.

There can be no doubt that Rodzinski had a personal fondness for the *Siegfried Idyll* when this set was made, for, according to the accompanying notes, a group of Philharmonic Orchestra musicians serenaded him and his wife with this music shortly after the birth of their son—paralleling the very first performance by Wagner himself. Wagner used only sixteen instruments at that first performance, and on rare occasions it is played with a small group these days. Klemperer tried it for a WPA concert in New York, but he had WPA and union trouble and they engaged another conductor when Klemperer held his ground. There can be little doubt that in a small hall this combination would be fine; but in our large con-

cert halls, a full orchestra can achieve the requisite tenderness with added breadth by using a full complement of strings. If you contemplate adding this charming music to your library, this set is worth hearing. S.

Mozart: Die Entführung aus dem Serail—Overture (K. 384). London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (V-11-9191). \$1.

There are probably two reasons why RCA Victor so promptly re-pressed the above recording in this country—it was released in England during February of this year. The first reason is that a modern recording of this lively and tuneful music was badly needed, and the second probably is because the English critics hailed it as the most realistic recording of a full orchestra yet to be issued in that country. There is no question about it being realistic—one has the impression of sitting in the first row at a concert. One English critic said that it was too much for him and he could only really enjoy it from an adjoining room.

It is a question if this music requires such a brilliant performance. After all, it is light music supposedly in the Italian style—Mozart wanted to show that he could write better Italian opera than the Italians themselves. However, that is rather laboring the point. If you have a good reproducing instrument and you want to show how realistic it can sound, put this disc on it and give it medium volume. R.

International Night. Henry René and his Musette Orchestra. 3-10" discs in album. Victor Set S-44. \$3.

In announcing this album, RCA Victor describes it in part as follows: "Here on six record sides is to be found just the sort of music one can hear all over Europe, played night after night by café orchestras. It is music instantly recognizable. As in Europe, the selections bear titles more appropriately adapted for straightforward arrangements, rather than original ones.

"Thus, Liszt's *Gypsy Rhapsody* will be instantly recognizable as the *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*; Mozart's *Turkish Delight* conceals the familiar strains of his *Turkish Rondo*; and Tchaikovsky's *Neapolitan Echoes* will be acclaimed as a portion of the *Capriccio Italienne*. Dvorák's *Ecstasy* is based on the *Slavonic Dance No. 10*; Smetana's *Dance of the Clowns* comes from his opera, *The Bartered Bride*; and Chopin's *Peasant Wedding* is more familiarly known as the *Mazurka in D major (Op. 33, No. 2)*. All the present arrangements for the Musette Orchestra have been made by René."

For a full enjoyment of these records we suggest the following accessories: a red-checked tablecloth; an empty wine bottle with a candle in its neck; two glasses and one or more bottles of wine; one affable companion of the opposite sex.

Stravinsky: Four Norwegian Moods. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 1-12" disc (C-12371D). \$1.

Many music lovers have been awaiting a recording of this new work by Stravinsky since it was introduced by the Boston Symphony early in 1944. It was composed in Hollywood in 1942. These "Moods" are based on Norwegian folk tunes, several of which Grieg also used, and are the type of little pieces that most anyone may enjoy. While they are not of any great importance, they are certainly easy to listen to. There are four of them—*Intrada*; *Song*; *Wedding Dance*; and *Cortege*.

No one could ask for a better performance than is given by the Philharmonic-Symphony of New York under the direction of the composer. The reproduction is top-notch.

Music of Jerome Kern. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-622. \$4.85.

When Kostelanetz decided to make an album of the late Jerome Kern's melodies, he selected twenty of the tunes that most appealed to him, and the present set is the result. Of course, he chose *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*; *The Night Was Made for Love*; and *Ol' Man River*. However, many of the lesser-known numbers, which perhaps some of us have forgotten, are quite charming and will doubtless bring back pleasant memories.

Kostelanetz has spared no pains in making his versions highly artistic and always attractive. Columbia has achieved most faithful recordings. Here is an album that should reach the best sellers' list in a hurry.

Cole Porter Songs. Fred Waring and his Pennsylvanians. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-467. \$2.75.

Fred Waring and Cole Porter have often teamed-up together and it is said that it was at Mr. Porter's suggestion that Fred made the present recordings. Cole selected the pieces that he particularly likes and Fred made the "production" arrangements that are used on these discs, using his famous glee club quite liberally.

All of the Decca albums by Fred Waring have enjoyed large sales and we will be much surprised if the present one becomes an exception to that rule.

Falla: El Amor Brujo. Argentinita (vocal, finger-snapping, heel dance, and castanets) with The Ballet Theatre Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-390. \$2.75.

This is the Ballet Theatre's version of Falla's famous ballet *El Amor Brujo*. It contains twelve of the sixteen sections of the original ballet. The vocal parts are sung by Argentinita, who also supplies finger-snapping, heel dances and enlivens things with her castanets. All in all it is a grand performance, and those who are interested in music of this character will certainly enjoy this splendid recording. The reproduction is most satisfactory.

Weinberger: Schwanda—Polka and Fugue. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-12372D). \$1.

Ormandy and his players give a fine spirited performance of this popular music. It has been well-recorded, and so the present disc should enjoy a wide sale.

Strauss, Josef—arr. Sereby: *Village Swallows Waltzes*. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-11-9189). \$1.

This disc provides music that makes an ideal background for a stein or two of Pilsner and some pleasant conversation, but without these adjuncts it has little to offer. It is nicely played and well recorded.

Six Dances. Philadelphia Orchestra "Pops" conducted by Eugene Ormandy and Saul Caston. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-588. \$3.85.

C-12209-D *Glière: The Red Poppy*—Russian Sailors' Dance. One side, and *Fernandez: Malazarte*—Batuque. (Caston).

C-12210-D *Smetana: The Bartered Bride*—Dance of the Comedians (Act III). One side, and *Dvorák: Slavonic Dance No. 10 in E minor, Op. 72, No. 2*. (Ormandy.)

C-12211-D *Brahms: Hungarian Dance No. 5*. One side, and *Strauss, J.: Wine, Women, and Song, Op. 333*. (Ormandy.)

We live in Philadelphia but we never heard of the Philadelphia Orchestra "Pops." However, we learn that this orchestra is made up of players from the Philadelphia Orchestra and was formed to make these recordings. In two of the selections the players are led by Saul Caston, formerly assistant conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra, and now conductor of the Denver Symphony. The balance of the selections were directed by Mr. Ormandy, the orchestra's permanent conductor.

As all of the selections are popular favorites, and as they are brilliantly performed, it would appear that the present album should enjoy a wide sale. The reproduction throughout is top-notch.

Romberg: Faithfully Yours. One side, and *Offenbach: Barcarolle* ("Tales of Hoffman"). Sigmund Romberg and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-11-9222). \$1.

Dinner music tastefully played and nicely recorded by a large orchestra under the distinguished direction of the popular composer Sigmund Romberg—a disc that nearly everyone will like.

"A Salute to Vincent Youmans." Russ Case and his Orchestra and Chorus. *Great Day*. One side, and *Sometimes I'm Happy*. 1-12" disc (V-28-0407). 75¢. *Tea for Two*. One side, and *Hallelujah*. 1-12" disc (V-28-0408). 75¢.

RCA Victor has chosen four of Vincent Youmans' top tunes and Russ Case has given up-to-the-minute renditions—vocals by a fine chorus. They have been well recorded with plenty of brilliance.

CONCERTO

**Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18.**

Eugene Liszt (piano) with Philharmonic Orchestra of Los Angeles conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 5-12" discs in album. Decca Set DA-465. \$5.85.

Decca solidly casts her glove into the arena of serious recorded music with this fine album of Rachmaninoff's *Concerto No. 2 in C Minor for Piano and Orchestra*. The soloist is Eugene List, the young American pianist who entered the pages of history, when, as a sergeant in the U. S. Army, he hobnobbed of an evening with Stalin and Truman at Potsdam. The orchestral portion is supplied by Alfred Wallenstein and the Philharmonic Orchestra of Los Angeles.

Comparisons with previous recordings—those by Rachmaninoff, Moisevitch and Sandor—come down to a matter of taste and preference. Possibly the present set is the richest-hued and the most realistically recorded. It goes without saying that there is an aura about the historic Rachmaninoff-Stokowski performance, for it is still a fine recording, though less fully and clearly registered than its followers. Certainly it cannot boast the clarity of the present Decca album.

Eugene List is admirably equipped to play this music. His youth and its ardor respond unerringly to the broadly romantic implications of the glowing score. Furthermore, Mr. List has a desirably facile technique, for Rachmaninoff was never a composer not to make demands upon his performers. The orchestra under Wallenstein apparently sees eye to eye with the soloist and its tone is surprisingly smooth. A fine balance has been achieved between pianist and orchestra.

We would like to advise you to turn your bass controls down to a lower level while playing this set. You will obtain more satisfactory results. With so fine a performance, it is a pity that some of the record surfaces are not smoother.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

CHAMBER MUSIC

**Prokofiev: Sonata in D major, Op. 94.** Joseph Szigeti (violin) and Leonid Hambro (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-620. \$3.85.

Joseph Szigeti has always been one of the outstanding interpreters of Prokofiev's music. He has long been a close friend of the Soviet composer, and his performances of the two violin *concerti* have been occasions of interest and importance.

The *Sonata in D Major*, which Donald Fuller in *Modern Music* calls: "... the finest abstract Prokofiev since the second Violin Concerto," was flown to Szigeti in manuscript form at the request of the composer and performed for the first time at the violinist's concert in Boston on November 26, 1944. This

was its United States' premiere.

The music is simple and objective, refreshingly so. It is of an almost Mozartian clarity of outline, immediately apparent in the lovely first movement. The second movement, the *Scherzo*, is strongly rhythmical and filled with contrasting movement, while the *Andante* offers a serenity of mood which finds Prokofiev in a contemplative frame of mind. The fourth and final movement, *Allegro con brio*, is agitated and by far the most complex of the four sections.

Szigeti, as might be expected, plays the work with authority. His rather thin, penetrating tone is admirably suited to the style of this music, and he is ably supported by Leonid Hambro at the piano. But it is Szigeti's show. Recording excellent. D.

Boccherini: Sonata No. 2 in C major for 'cello and piano. Gregor Piatigorsky (violoncello) and Valentin Pavlovsky (piano). 1-12" disc (C-71785D). \$1.

Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805), the celebrated Italian composer—a contemporary of Haydn—was also a violoncellist of note and wrote many pieces for his instrument. The present sonata, while a very beautiful one, is seldom heard—we don't recall another recording of it. The more popular one No. 6 in A major has been recorded several times. We mention this in order to avoid confusion.

Piatigorsky and Pavlovsky give a most pleasing performance of this delicate little work, and those who enjoy chamber music of extreme simplicity yet requiring consummate skill for a proper performance, will find this disc of great interest. The reproduction is excellent.

OPERA

**Celebrated Operatic Arias.** Bidú Sayão (soprano) with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-612. \$4.85.

C-71767-D Mozart: *Marriage of Figaro*—Non so più (Act I) and Voi che sapete (Act II). (Sung in Italian.)

C-71768-D Bellini: *La Sonnambula*—Ah! non credea mirarti! (Act III). One side, and Puccini: *La Bohème*—Mimi's Farewell (Act III). (Sung in Italian.)

C-71769-D Massenet: *Manon*—Manon's Entrance (Act I) and Adieu, notre petite table (Act II). (Sung in French.)

C-71770-D Gounod: *Faust*—The King of Thule (Act III) and Jewel Song (Act III). (Sung in French.)

It is with great pleasure that we recommend this album of arias by Bidú Sayão. We recommend it in the highest terms for the Brazilian soprano is a finished singer, completely at home in the diversified styles you will find here. She is equally convincing

in the music of Mozart or Puccini, while her singing of arias by Bellini, Gounod and Massenet is to the manner born.

Miss Sayão has the taste and the good sense never to attempt anything that is not suited to her rather fragile voice and art. Hers is not, by any stretch of the imagination, a great voice, but its emission is so free and fluent, her taste so much at the disposal of a thoroughly artistic singing temperament, that she has become one of the most distinctive artists now before the public. The soprano's tones are ideal for recording. The lack of sheer "stuff," one is sometimes conscious of in the far reaches of the Metropolitan Opera House, is never apparent on records. In this medium she is completely satisfying.

Miss Sayão is the Metropolitan's current *Susanna* in Mozart's *Nozze di Figaro*; one of the best in that illustrious organization's history. And so it is interesting, with this in mind, to have a glimpse of her *Cherubino* (a role she has never sung in New York). And what a captivating little page she is with her singing of his two principal arias, *Voi che sapete* and *Non so più cosa son, cosa faccio!* The Mozartian style is perfect; the voice singularly sweet and fresh. Indeed, *Voi che sapete* has not had such a lovely performance since Melba's classic rendition in the acoustical era.

Miss Sayão made her debut at the Metropolitan as Massenet's *Manon*, and so there is added value in having reminders of this joyous event with her singing of *Adieu, notre petite table* and *Je suis encore toute étourdie*. Both are sensitively and beautifully sung.

The *Addio!* from the third act of Puccini's *La Bohème* has always been one of the little Brazilian's most affecting scenes in the opera house. Perhaps neither she nor Fausto Cleve and his orchestra give the aria quite enough body in its soaring climax, but the final pianissimo on *Addio senza rancor* is a memorable moment of recorded art. On the reverse, Miss Sayão sings a fluent, straightforward account of *Ah, no credea mirarti* from Bellini's *La Sonnambula*, thus challenging comparison with Muzio's more dramatic record.

The last record contains on its two surfaces the *Roi de Thulé* ballad and the *Jewel Song* from Gounod's *Faust*. Miss Sayão has never sung *Marquerite* in New York. Doubtlessly, some portions of the role would prove heavy for her delicate tones. This *scena*, however, is well within the scope of her voice, and she suggests the dreamy introspection of the ballad and the girlish glee of the *Jewel Song* with rare artistry. One could only ask for better trills in the latter.

Miss Sayão and the competent orchestra under Fausto Cleve have been capitally recorded, and Columbia is to be commended for not yielding to the temptation of trying to make this singer sound like Helen Traubel or Kirsten Flagstad.

MAX DE SCHAUNSEE.

Wagner: Die Walküre—Duet, Act I, Scene 3. (Sung in German). Helen Traubel (soprano) and Emery Darcy (tenor) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-618. \$3.85.

Columbia continues this month with its recording of Wagnerian scenes involving the sturdy art of Helen Traubel. Here we have the finale to Act I of *Die Walküre* sung by Mme. Traubel (*Sieglinde*), Emery Darcy (*Siegmund*), Artur Rodzinski and the Philharmonic-Symphony of New York.

The album begins with *Sieglinde's* question, *Schlaefst du, Gast?*, as she enters the hall of *Hunding's* dwelling. It continues without interruption or cut to the wild exit of the lovers into the spring night.

Mme. Traubel has not appeared as *Sieglinde* for many seasons now, though this was her first role, in fact, the role of her debut at the Metropolitan. In those days she sang it on many occasions to the *Bruennhilde* of Kirsten Flagstad. We can recall with pleasure a performance here in Philadelphia, when during the third act, Mme. Traubel's thrilling utterance of the sweeping phrase, "*O herstes Wunder! Herrlichste Maid!*" electrified the audience and threatened to dim, at least momentarily, the lustre of the fabulous lady from Oslo.

Mme. Traubel now appears a bit mature for the role. She certainly does not achieve the impetuosity of spring and youth that Lotte Lehmann's classic impersonation conveys in the Victor recording of Act I (V-298). But then, Mme. Lehmann was in some things a unique artist. Mme. Traubel, it must be reported, sings with a distinction and fine-grained artistry that serve her well in such phrases as *Mir allein wechte das Auge* and *O lasse in Nahe*. Sometimes her upper register sounds driven and metallic as in parts of the famous passage, *Du bist der Lenz!*

Mr. Darcy is like a man wearing a suit of clothes many times too big for him. With the exception of certain lyric phrases and the *Spring Song*, his light tones are overwhelmed and lost in the vortex of the Wagnerian orchestra. His final phrase is sad indeed.

Artur Rodzinski and the Philharmonic-Symphony of New York sound unusually well in this music. It is through their efforts that most of the poetry of the scene is achieved.

Reproduction is very fair. Mr. Darcy, given the physical limitations of his voice, might have been moved up closer to the microphone, and would then possibly have sounded less like *Sieglinde's* son and more like her lover. Every now and then the reproduction booms, but on the whole there is little room for complaint. Surfaces are for the most part not uniformly good.

MAX DE SCHAUNSEE.

CHORAL



Camp Meetin' Choir—Spirituals. 3-10" discs in album. Diamond Set D-14. \$3.

The Camp Meetin' Choir grew from a group of Negro workers who used to sing as they toiled in one of the big tobacco plants in Winston-Salem. A colored preacher of a local church heard them and invited them to sing for his congregation. From that humble beginning this group has reached the point where it is now heard over a coast-to-coast radio hook-up and has appeared in many concerts, the most notable of which was given in Madison Square Garden, New York. Recently the State Department has requested this choir to make transcriptions that may be used on government radio stations in Europe and Asia.

The present recordings are real down-to-earth Negro spirituals—nothing has been added. For those who are interested, these are the real unadulterated spirituals of the South—hymns that have been handed down by word of mouth for generations. The titles meant nothing to us but students of the subject may wish to know that the following selections are included in this album: *Don't Wonder About Him*; *I'm Gonna Walk Right In and Make Myself at Home*; *If I Can Just Make It In*; *Lord Search My Heart*; *Anyhow*; and *Working on the Building*.

Russian Fair (A collection of Russian folk songs). (Sung in Russian). Don Cossack Chorus conducted by Serge Jaroff. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-619. \$4.85.

Admirers of the Don Cossack Chorus will welcome this fine album. It contains a number of Russian folk songs, among which might be mentioned: *Monotonously Rings the Little Bell*; *Song of Stenka Razin*; and *Dark Eyes*.

For those who do not understand Russian the English translations of each song, with appropriate notes, will be found on the inside covers of the album. The Columbia recorders have captured most realistic reproductions of this famous chorus.

Spirituals. The Galilee Singers, and The Jubileers. 4-10" discs in album. Davis Set DA-8. \$3.50.

These two groups of colored singers give unadulterated versions of these well-known spirituals. The Galilee Singers offer: *Traveling Shoes*; *Before This Time Another Year*; *Hush, Somebody's Callin' My Name*; and *Blind Barnabus*. The Jubileers, under the direction of Richard Huey, offer: *Give Me That Old Time Religion*; *Keep Out the Sinners' Way*; *Daniel Was a Witness for My Lord*; and *Jesus Gonna Make Up My Dynin' Bed*.

For those who like their spirituals sung as one might hear them in the deep south, this album should prove highly satisfactory. The reproduction is good.

VOCAL



Mahler: Songs of a Wayfarer. (Sung in German.)

Carol Brice (contralto) with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-267. \$2.85.

The four songs that comprise Gustav Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer* (*Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*) are set to melancholy and beautiful poems written by the composer himself. Mahler was only 23 when he wrote these poems and their musical settings. At that time he was conductor of the opera at Cassel, Germany, and he was getting over the throes of his love for the beautiful young soprano, Johanna Richter, one of the company's singers. Mahler, in the surprise and hurt of rejection, launched himself into these compositions and said at the time: "I have written a song-cycle . . . all of which are dedicated to her. She does not know them. But they can tell her only what she already knows. Their burden is a man who has found only sadness in love and goes forth into the world as a wanderer."

All these youthful and impetuous happenings occurred in 1883, but the songs (originally six and now four) were not heard until they were presented for the first time anywhere at an orchestral concert in Berlin in March 1896 with the Dutch singer, Anton Sistermans, as the soloist.

The titles of the four songs are *When My Treasure becomes a Bride*; *I went this Morning over the Field*; *I have a glowing Knife in my Breast*; and *My Treasure's two Blue Eyes sent Me out into the Wide World*. The music which served as a preliminary sketch for Mahler's Symphony No. 1 in D Major is, naturally enough, often reminiscent of that fascinating composition. Mahler's orchestra is at all times lovely and elastic, often silvery and fresh in its youthful quality. The vocal line has the simplicity of folk-song.

Columbia made a fortunate choice when it picked Carol Brice, the young Negro contralto, to sing this cycle. Miss Brice has a lovely, clear voice and her German diction is altogether admirable. One can see what these songs and the preparation of them have meant to the young singer. Here and there, Miss Brice's tonal features recall Marian Anderson's singing both in quality and style. There is the same utter seriousness of approach; the same sincerity of purpose. But Miss Brice has plenty that is distinctively her own and we are in no way trying to suggest that she is a copy of another singer.

Fritz Reiner and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra deserve nothing but the highest praise for their part in this fine undertaking. Mr. Reiner's work is the acme of refinement; the mainspring of the set. Reproduction is A-1; surfaces could be and should be better than they are (particularly side four, where the pianissimo ending is marred by crackling).

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Schubert: Songs from "Die Schöne Müllerin," Op. 25. (Sung in German.) Lotte Lehmann (soprano) with piano accompaniments by Paul Ulanowsky. 7-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-615. \$7.85.

Good news indeed! Lotte Lehmann, undoubtedly the greatest living lieder singer, has recorded Schubert's song-cycle *Die Schöne Müllerin* (*The Maid of the Mill*). This rounds out most beautifully Mme. Lehmann's account of lieder-cycles on records.

There are some very interesting notes by Mme. Lehmann herself on the inside cover of the album. To quote her own words: "Schubert's cycle of the lovely miller maid set to the poems of Wilhelm Mueller reveals the whole gamut of human emotion, from the buoyant hope and joy of a youth in love to utter disillusionment. Through the fields wanders the carefree young miller boy filled with all the joy of living. Before him his road stretches like a bright ribbon edged by wooded hills, and he follows its way with a gay song on his lips . . ."

Mme. Lehmann's notes are most illuminating, the singer's intense feeling coloring her eloquent writing. She describes each of the 20 songs in detail. A following of these literary vignettes will greatly aid the enjoyment of what she has to say on 14 record surfaces.

Mme. Lehmann's singing is uneven. Sometimes the voice sounds worn and brittle and there are difficulties with both breath and pitch. This is most apparent in the first three songs of the set, where the soprano's voice seems unsupported. Trouble with rapid passages, with quick turns is also noticeable. At other times she sounds like the Lehmann of old, full-voiced and firm. Especially is this so in her singing of *Der Neugierige*, *Tränenregen* (beautifully sung) and *Die Liebe Farbe*. This is Lehmann in the full possession of her powers. Whatever the varying condition of the singer's voice, her authority and style are matters which are beyond questioning. That emotional intensity, that smoldering temperament which is peculiarly hers, is apparent at all times. It is indeed fortunate that Columbia has issued these records. They undoubtedly set an interpretive standard.

Paul Ulanowsky is, as he has been on so many occasions, Mme. Lehmann's thrice admirable accompanist. The recording is very lifelike, but the surfaces are not uniformly good. Sometimes this is disturbing, especially in soft passages.

For some unknown reason Mme. Lehmann sings only 19 of the 20 songs in this cycle. She omits *Ungehduld*, of which she made a recording for Victor a number of years ago.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Calypso. Sir Lancelot and the Caribbean Serenaders. 3-10" discs in album. Keynote album K-126. \$3.

Sir Lancelot is the best of the Calypso singers that we have heard—it is no effort to catch every word of his songs, and that is important, for a Calypso song

is not much without the story that it tells. In the present recordings Sir Lancelot has the benefit of a lively orchestra and the rhythm is such that these discs may be used for dancing. The present album contains typical Calypso ditties such as *Ugly Woman* and *Scandal in the Family*. If you are interested in such novelties, this album is worth investigation. The reproduction is splendid.

Kern: All Through the Day (from "Centennial Summer"). One side, and **Gershwin: Porgy and Bess**—Where's My Bess. James Melton (tenor) with David Saperton and Bert Shefter (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (V-11-9224). \$1.

This disc doesn't click with us. *All Through the Day* is nothing to get excited about and the ever-popular *Where's My Bess* has received better renditions. The two-piano accompaniments are attractive, but Mr. Melton gives these selections an operatic performance that makes them seem much more important than they really are.

Schubert: Ave Maria, Op. 52, No. 6. One side, and **Schubert: Serenade** (*Schwanengesang* No. 4). Nelson Eddy (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 1-12" disc (C-71786D). \$1.

Both of these ever-popular favorites are sung in English by Nelson Eddy, whose fine diction makes each word easily understood. Undoubtedly there are many persons who will greatly prize this excellent record. The reproduction is splendid.

Favorite Catholic Hymns. Vol. I. Anna Kaskas (contralto) with the Barrette Singers. 3-10" discs in album. McLaughlin & Reilly Set No. 1. \$3.50.

Favorite Catholic Hymns. Vol. II. Anna Kaskas (contralto) with the Barrette Singers. 3-10" discs in album. McLaughlin & Reilly Set No. 2. \$3.50.

These two albums contain a number of the most popular Catholic hymns arranged for contralto solo and mixed chorus. The soloist is Anna Kaskas of the Metropolitan Opera and she is supported by the Barrette Singers. Miss Kaskas got her early training in the choir of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Hartford, Conn., her home parish, and later was soloist at the Catholic Cathedral of that city. We rather suppose that she selected the hymns for these albums.

The arrangements are particularly fine and the blending of Miss Kaskas' voice with the supporting singers is excellent. One certainly does not have to be of the Catholic faith to appreciate these superb renditions.

Album No. 1 contains: *O Lord I am not Worthy*; *Mother of Christ*; *To Jesus Heart All Burning*; *Sweet Sacrament Divine*; *Dear Guardian of Mary*; and *Mother at Your Feet is Kneeling*.

Album No. 2 contains: *Good Night Sweet Jesus*; *Mother Dearest Mother Fairest*; *Come Holy Ghost Creator Blest*; *Jesus My Lord My God My All*; *Oh What Could My Jesus Do More*; and *Holy God We Praise Thy Name*.

Israel Sings. (Jewish Liturgical Music.) Soloists, choir, and organ. 6-12" discs in album. (In automatic sequence.) \$15.

The only thing that will prevent a really wide sale of this album is that not nearly enough persons will take the time to listen to the set. It is utterly fascinating music from cover to cover, and will appeal to nearly anyone interested in vocal music beyond the popular realm. Issued in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Hebrew Union College, and produced jointly by that organization and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, this set contains music from the Birnbaum collection housed at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati—reputedly the world's greatest collection of Jewish music.

Jewish music has been subjected to many various styles and influences throughout the ages. Traditional tunes acquire styles and colors characteristic of the nationalities and customs of the day, as does the music of other faiths. This collection of numbers easily reveals some of these changes and styles that characterized the music of different periods as it attached itself to the music of the synagogue.

That the contents of this fine album may be readily appreciated by anyone, each selection is preceded by a short explanatory narration, beautifully spoken. Side one is an introductory narration. Side two is the *Lo Omus* by baritone cantor with organ and harp. Side three has the voice of a tenor cantor (with organ) and is the least successful side. Side four is a pilgrimage song sung a cappella by a good choir—music of the 16th century Italian Rossi, called art music. Side five presents a fine tune of Chasidum by the tenor of side three—this time much better and with charming harp arpeggios in the accompaniment. Side six is a soprano and alto duet with harpsichord accompaniment of a song by Caceres written in 1739, very lovely indeed. Side seven, *Eulogy on the Death of Moses*, is a very Gregorian-like piece, found in Geniza and said to be the oldest music manuscript in Judaism, superbly sung by a baritone cantor with splendid organ accompaniment. Side eight presents a different tenor, with a nice open voice singing *M'Chalkel Chayim* by Wolf Bass (18th cent.) with traces of Gluck's operatic style in the Jewish tradition. Side nine is a choir, this time accompanied by organ, singing in a fine choral style not unlike a general Protestant anthem. The number is *Haneros Halolu*, the melody by a Protestant, Christian Fasch of the court of Frederick the Great. Side ten is the *Tal Kaddish* by baritone solo with choral responses, music from the last century and most engaging to hear. Sides eleven and twelve are the *Yismach Moshe* and the *Kaddish for the Ninth of Ov*, very contrasting pieces and highly effective in the singing of the tenor cantor.

These are admittedly sketchy outlines of the contents of this thoroughly enjoyable album. We were quite fascinated throughout, and were deeply in-

debted to the narration and the excellent accompanying booklet for a greater appreciation of it all. The reproduction is satisfactory though not outstanding, and the records are pressed on vinylite. All necessary information about the music sources, performers, arrangers, etc., is carefully provided in the booklet. This set is sure to prove a "find" to a lot of persons who will pause a moment to investigate. S.

Annie Get Your Gun. Ethel Merman and members of the original cast with chorus and orchestra conducted by Jay Blackton. 6-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-468. \$5.25.

What could one say about this album? The biggest musical hit of last season recorded by the original cast headed by the inimitable Ethel Merman. Done up in Decca's usual style with a booklet giving the words of all of the songs that are contained in this set of discs. Twelve (count 'em) of the top tunes from "Annie Get Your Gun" splendidly recorded and housed in an attractive album.

We hope your dealer has one in stock when you call for it. We hope, we hope, we hope!

Hymns Children Love. Paula Heminghouse (soprano) and Muriel Wilson (contralto) with organ accompaniments. 3-10" discs in album. Bibletone Set HV. \$3.50.

These two lovely voices blend beautifully in these little hymns, and many grown-ups, as well as children, will surely be thrilled by the simple messages that are so pleasingly presented on these discs. Excellent diction makes the words easily understood, but if you are not familiar with all of the hymns, a booklet giving the words and the music is supplied with each album. The record surfaces are particularly smooth, much quieter than some of the early Bibletone sets, and the recording has been faithfully accomplished. Appropriate organ accompaniments add to the charm of these records.

The following hymns have been chosen for this collection: *Jesus Loves Me*; *When He Cometh*; *Jesus Loves Even Me*; *Stand Up For Jesus*; *Can a Little Child Like Me*; and *There is a Happy Land*.

Jewish Folk Songs. Ruth Rubin (mezzo-soprano) with piano accompaniments by Gertrude Rady. 3-10" discs in album. Asch Set A-607. \$2.75.

Songs of Israel. Secular Folk songs sung by well known artists with piano accompaniments. 4-10" discs in album. Asch Set A-604. \$3.50.

Songs of Israel (Vol. II). Sacred and Secular songs by Cantors Waldman and Ganchoff with organ and piano accompaniments. 3-12" discs in album. Asch Set A-610. \$3.50.

For those who are interested in Jewish music these three albums are worth investigation. They have proven sufficiently popular so that any dealer who handles Jewish recordings will certainly have these three items in stock, and it is therefore possible for our readers, who live in or near a big city, to hear

these discs before ordering them.

The number of selections and their wide variety makes it impossible for us to cover these albums in any detail. Of particular interest to us was the album of Jewish folk songs by Ruth Rubin. One does not have to be Jewish to appreciate these lovely little melodies. Miss Rubin is a Canadian, and has for a number of years devoted much time to the study of modern Jewish secular folk songs. She has a most pleasant voice of excellent quality and seems to be putting her whole heart into these renditions. Miss Rubin's accompanist, Gertrude Rady, made the musical arrangements for these songs and her fine musicianship adds greatly to the charm of the recordings. Miss Rady is a graduate of the Julliard School of Music and studied for several years at the Moscow Conservatory.

Nevin: The Rosary. One side, and **Bond: A Perfect Day.** Thomas L. Thomas (baritone) with All-String Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Gustave Haenschen. 1-12" disc (V-11-9190). \$1.

Those who are interested in these selections will doubtless find the present renditions highly attractive. Mr. Thomas' fine diction makes each word easily understood and his rich baritone is heard to advantage. Simplicity is his keynote, and one senses that he feels that the songs themselves are the important things, not an exposition of his vocal ability. A well-trained chorus, which remains appropriately in the background, adds to the attractiveness of these really artistic renditions.

Strange Fruit. Sung by Josh White, accompanying himself on the guitar. 3-10" discs in album. Key-note Set K-125. \$3.

Josh White is continually gaining in popularity in the field of hill-billy folk songs and so this new album will be quite a treat to his many admirers. The fine reproduction of these recordings gives his famous guitar accompaniments their full value and that is highly important.

Josh has selected the following ballads for the present album: *Strange Fruit*; *John Henry*; *House of the Rising Sun*; *Evil Hearted Man*; *Riddle Song*; and *Whatcha Goin' to do*?

Songs of Ireland. Vol. I. Danny O'Neil (tenor) with orchestral accompaniment. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set No. 107. \$4.50.

Songs of Ireland. Vol. II. Danny O'Neil (tenor) with orchestral accompaniment. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set No. 108. \$4.50.

These two albums contain sixteen of the most popular Irish songs; of course, there is *I'll Take You Back Again*, *Kathleen*; *My Wild Irish Rose*; *Mother Machree*; *Macushla* and others in the same vein. Danny O'Neil sings them most acceptably and is well supported by an adequate orchestra. If you would like some Irish ballads well recorded on Viny-

lite (non-breakable) records, these albums should fill the bill very nicely.

Jewish Traditional Songs and Dances. (Sung in Yiddish). The Oscar Julius Quartet (male voices). 3-12" discs in album. Asch Set. No. 400. \$3.50.

The Oscar Julius Quartet has been on major Yiddish radio programs for over 12 years and has appeared in concerts throughout the country. A dozen songs have been selected from their repertoire for this album, and while we are not familiar with any of them, we presume that the more popular numbers were chosen. We can say that the voices that make up this quartet are excellent ones and that fine harmony is achieved in the renditions. The reproduction is highly satisfactory and the surfaces of the discs are very smooth. If you are interested in music of this character, the present album is probably worth investigation.

ORGAN



Organ Recordings on Gregorian Themes. Dr. Eugene Lapiere playing the organ at Carnegie Music Hall, Pittsburgh. 4-10" discs in album. Gregorian Institute of America set O-1. \$6.

The idea behind this album is a splendid one but the results obtained cannot be justified by the widest stretch of our imagination. The reproduction of the magnificent Carnegie organ is poor by any standards. It is not recorded at nearly high enough a level, nor wide enough in range. Some of the old early electric recordings of Sittard playing at St. Michael's, Hamburg, Germany, are far superior to this, and the present organ recordings of RCA Victor are beyond comparison.

Even if the reproduction had been ideal, it would not have covered up the barren, unimaginative improvisations of Dr. Lapiere. Dr. Lapiere is head of the music department of the University of Montreal and president of the archdiocesan music commission of Montreal. Any number of American church organists and recitalists can improvise with far greater skill than Dr. Lapiere, to say nothing of Marcel Dupré, whose phenomenal improvisations have astonished many audiences. Gregorian themes are indeed interesting subjects for improvisation; but such ordinary, sterile products as Dr. Lapiere's work on the Communion "Memento" or the Asperges is hardly worthy of a conservatory student. We invited several competent organists, Catholic and Protestant, to hear this set (and confirm our own impressions), and they were of one accord in finding this work dull. One distinguished organist cracked a broad smile when we played the postlude improvisation on "Alma Redemptoris." It is quite theatrical. Dr. Lapiere comes closest to a fair improvisation on "In paradisum." We cannot urge the Gregorian Institute strongly enough to issue another set along these same lines;

but to procure adequate recording equipment and an organist of unquestioned improvising ability. This music should be recorded in a church, for inspiration is the soul of improvisation.

In addition to the several improvisations mentioned above, this album also contains Dr. Lapierre's improvisations on "Ite missa est" of Mass IX (Mode I); and his performances of a *Canzona* by Bach, a *Contrapuntal Chorale* by J. Lemmens, and a *Solemn March* by E. Paladilhe. These last three are also improvisations on Gregorian themes by the composers mentioned, although hardly shining examples of the art.

S.

VIOLIN



Brahms: Hungarian Dances. Erica Morini (violin) with piano accompaniments by Arthur Balsam. 3-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-1053. \$3.

Here is a unique little album containing six of Brahms' famous Hungarian Dances arranged for violin and piano—Joachim, the eminent violinist and friend of the composer, made such arrangements but the record labels do not state whether they are the versions used by Miss Morini. However, this set of discs contains a lot of music that persons who like lively violin selections of high quality will certainly enjoy. The recording has been faithfully accomplished. This album contains the following dances: Nos. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 17.

Villa-Lobos: Song of the Black Swan. One side, and **Novacek: Perpetual Motion.** Richard Odnoposoff (violin) with piano accompaniment by Otto Herz. 1-10" disc (V-10-1228). 75¢.

Odnoposoff has chosen two entirely different types of selections for this little disc. The Villa-Lobos piece is of a melancholy character with long sustained notes, while the *Perpetual Motion*, as its name implies, is a series of quick fingering passages without a break. This one record tells the whole story of Mr. Odnoposoff's superlative art, for on it, we have the long sweeping notes of smooth beautiful tone and fine timbre, and we also have an example of his marvelous technique in fingering and bowing. Here is a disc that students of the violin will find of unusual interest.

CHILDREN



Schubert—His Story and His Music. Jose Ferrer (speaking) with Eugene Morgan (baritone) and Vox Symphony Orchestra conducted by Max Goberman. 3-10" discs in album. Vox Set No. 254. \$3.75.

Last month the first in this series of albums, whose purpose it is to acquaint young people with great composers and their music, was released. It dealt with Mozart, and now we have the story of Franz

Schubert and his music.

The idea is a very clever one. The distinguished actor, Jose Ferrer, tells the story of Schubert's life in a series of interesting episodes, and in each episode there is introduced an appropriate bit of the composer's music. A complete list of the selections played is listed on the cover of the album so that if the children like any particular piece, a full recording of it may be obtained for their further enjoyment and study. We surely feel that after a child has listened to these discs, he will certainly always remember something of Schubert and his music.



MISCELLANEOUS

Square Dances—With Calls. Vol. I. Ralph Page, the singing caller, and his New England Orchestra. 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 630. \$3.

Square Dances—Without Calls. Vol. I. Paul Hunt and his Rock Candy Mountaineers. 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 631. \$3.

There seems to be an unending demand for square dance records. Here are two new albums (one with calls and one without); album No. 630 has a booklet of instructions with diagrams prepared by Michael Herman. Mr. Herman is well-known to most square dance fans through his magazine *The Folk Dancer*. He is also the director of the Community Folk Dance Center of New York.

We are not an authority on this sort of thing, but we would think that these albums should be highly acceptable to those persons who are interested in this presently very popular recreation.

Square Dances. Carson Robison and his Pleasant Valley Boys, with calls by Lawrence V. Loy. 4-10" discs in album. Victor Set P-155. \$3.

RCA Victor has recently announced a new set of Square Dance records with calls by Lawrence V. Loy, nationally recognized folk dance authority, of Massachusetts State College, Amherst. Bound in this album are several pages of instructions for doing each of the dances included in this collection. The selections are: *Irish Washerwoman*; *Spanish Cavaliero*; *Solomon Levi*; *Comin' Round the Mountain*; *Jingle Bells*; *Paddy Dear*; *Golden Slippers*; and *Turkey in the Straw*.

DICTION



Wilde: Importance of Being Earnest—Lady Bracknell interviews John Worthing. Edith Evans and John Gielgud. 1-10" disc (V-B-8883). \$1.35.

This recording of this famous scene from Oscar Wilde's *Importance of Being Earnest* was re-pressed over here and remained in the Victor catalog for several years, but was finally discontinued. As there

has been some demand for copies of it, it will be of interest to some readers to know that a few were received in a recent shipment from England.

Prayer Time. Eight short sermons by the Rt. Rev. Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen. 4-12" discs in album. Angelus Set No. 1. \$6.75.

In the May 6 issue of the magazine *Time*, the leading article under "Religion" was devoted to a review of this album of records. Since then there have been numerous requests as to where the album might be purchased. We have received several dozen ourselves. It appears that a review copy was sent to *Time* long before the records were ready for national distribution, however, it is our understanding that the album is now generally available.

It contains eight short sermons by the Rt. Rev. Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen, the Catholic Church's best-known and most popular pulpit and radio orator. Monsignor Sheen is also known for the large number of important persons he has converted to the Catholic faith. Among them may be mentioned Heywood Broun, Henry Ford II, Clare Booth Luce and the communist leader Louis Budenz. We certainly feel that *Time*, in reviewing these records, unduly played up the conversion phase of Monsignor Sheen's work, for there is not one bit of purely Catholic propaganda in any of the present sermons. They are all messages that any Christian can take to his heart with profit. In fact, we doubt if anyone, Christian or non-Christian, will quarrel with the moral principles set forth by this able churchman.

These recordings have caught, with photographic accuracy, the manner and spirit of Monsignor Sheen, and as one plays them in the quiet privacy of his own room, he has the feeling that the great preacher is speaking to him personally. There is nothing flamboyant about them. Their appeal is the simplicity and the sincerity of the speaker; he is always the pleader, never the bully.

At first glance one would think that this album would be of prime interest to Catholics only, but after listening to these records carefully, we rather feel that they will have a very definite appeal to all those many persons who believe that the only revolution that can save civilization is that revolution that reforms men, not a revolution that reforms institutions. That is Monsignor Sheen's firm belief and he has thousands of adherents within and without the Catholic Church. Many of us feel that a great spiritual revival is the only thing that can save the confused world in which we live, and Monsignor Sheen is a great leader in that direction. We who are Catholics, and we who are not, might be serving humanity better than we know by supporting all leaders who are headed toward that goal.

R.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

Letters of Composers. An Anthology 1603-1945. Compiled and edited by Gertrude Norman and Miriam Lubell Shrifte. xviii + 422 + xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death. By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

Listening to the Orchestra. By Kitty Barne. 299 pp. Illustrated. The Bobbs-Merrill Company (Indianapolis). Price \$2.75.

Listening to Music Creatively. By Edwin J. Stringham. xx + 479 pp. Illustrated. Prentice-Hall, Inc. (New York.) Price \$5.

Talking Wax. By Leroy Hughbanks. 142 pp. The Hobson Book Press (New York). Price \$2.50.

Florestan: The Life and Work of Robert Schumann. By Robert Haven Schauffler. xiv, 574 pp. Illustrated. Henry Holt & Co. (New York). Price \$3.75.

Impresario. A memoir by S. Hurok in collaboration with Ruth Goode. 291 pp. Illustrated. Random House (New York). Price \$3.

Bad Boy of Music. By George Antheil. 378 pp. Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Biblestone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musieraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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Theme and Variations. An autobiography by Bruno Walter. Translated from the German by James A. Galston. Illustrated. xi+344+xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

As we consider the musicians of our time, we cannot think of one who is more universally admired than Bruno Walter. Throughout his long life he has devoted his boundless energy to his first love, music. Of course, he has been interested in the other cultural arts—he has always been an avid reader, and, as anyone who reads his book will quickly realize, he has developed a most lucid and interesting style of writing. For those who would be interested in what happened in the world of music in Germany and Austria from the turn of the century until the coming of Hitler, this book covers the subject as no other that we know of does. Mr. Walter came in close association with all the great musicians of that period, and his anecdotes and personal experiences are both illuminating and interesting.

As is generally known, Mr. Walter is a devoted disciple of Gustav Mahler, and no one has done more than he to bring that distinguished composer's works to the attention of the public. Among other things, *Theme and Variations* may be considered a source book on Mahler, for there are nearly 100 references to him in the index.

Mr. Walter's account of his travels after Hitler came to power makes exciting reading, but we are glad to report that he keeps himself under rigid self-control and approaches the subject with great objectivity. He gives a factual account of his escapes and those of his family without coloring them with pseudo-emotionalism. Those who read can appreciate his trials and suffering merely from the facts, and

Mr. Walter's calm and well-controlled descriptions of his experiences can only add to his stature as a man in the opinion of his readers.

Very often a reviewer will rather skip through a book of this size, perhaps some reviewers did, but we can honestly say that we read every word of it, and are looking forward to re-reading much of it as time affords us the opportunity. For those who are interested in Bruno Walter and his contemporaries in the realm of music, this book is heartily recommended.

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ORCHESTRA



Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 6-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1057. \$6.85.

The proverbial last word has now been said in Tchaikovsky Fiftths. Koussevitzky's readings of the Fifth and several other such items have long been considered the choicest of them all, and now we have a recording for all to have and to hold. Not that another version was needed, for Victor issued a beautifully recorded and deftly performed set by Ormandy a few years ago (M-828). Columbia a bit earlier gave us Rodzinski (with the Cleveland Orchestra) in a too brisk and straightforward reading (M-406) and then a few months later the Beecham version (M-470), which still takes top honors for sanity of interpretation, if nothing else. Beecham can churn up plenty of excitement, yet he seems to keep a better sense of proportion and prove his superior musical sophistication over some of our other conductors.

Koussevitzky realizes all the drama of the first movement without too much exaggeration; he plays the second movement nicely, if a trifle draggy; the third movement is as the first; but in the final movement is where he throws discretion to the four winds.

Stokowski in his wildest moments has never indulged in more radical tempo changes or more excessive rubatos. To some it will undoubtedly be a thriller; but to us it is merely overwrought. Beyond question is the playing of the Boston Orchestra, which, as usual, realizes every wish (and whim) of the conductor. The famous second movement horn solo, however, sounds better to us in the Beecham set. The reproduction in the present set is fine, and the surfaces smooth if a trifle high in the noise level. S.

Franck: Symphony in D minor. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-608. \$5.85.

In December, 1941, we reviewed the simultaneous releases by Victor and Columbia of this symphony; the Victor by Monteux (M-840) and the Columbia by Beecham (M-479). Our feelings remain precisely the same to this day. Monteux takes top honors for his uncanny reading of the score, although the San Francisco Orchestra has its bad moments in performing it. Beecham has a well recorded and well played set which reveals a fresh approach to the work within the bounds of good taste. The present Ormandy set is first of all the best reproduction, although some may prefer the clarity and brilliance of the Monteux one. Ormandy never fails to observe the letter of the score and produces a beautifully shaded and carefully nuanced job; but there seems to be something lacking which is intangible. It must be that divine spark of inspiration which Monteux holds throughout the work. We probably hold a minority opinion on this matter, for any performance as highly refined as Ormandy's will certainly please a multitude of listeners. We gathered this impression only after playing each set through side by side, a rather tedious job—but quite revealing.

Of the three sets discussed above, one can be sure of getting a fine album if he procures any one of them. The differences are drawn pretty finely. But one can be equally sure of an inferior acquisition if he takes the outrageous Mitropoulos set (Col. M-436) or the overblown Stokowski one (Vic. M-300). Stokowski's very old Victor Set (M-22) was not too bad, except for the reproduction. For his only symphony Franck left the world a lovable masterpiece well worth the effort to select a good recorded performance from the many available ones. S.

Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-627. \$3.85.

Those close to records every day often become annoyed with the insistent demands of popular taste. "Best sellers" invariably become "nerve janglers" to us, if we hear them too often—as we always do. Strangely enough, this reviewer had not heard the *Nutcracker Suite* for several years, and the pleasure afforded by this hearing was far greater than anticipated. It is without question one of the loveliest suites in music, and surely one of Tchaikovsky's most

ingratiating works. We are now desirous of hearing the entire ballet some day to find out what the rest of the music is like. The suite presented here is the usual one: Overture, March, the several Dances, and the Waltz of the Flowers. Of the eight numbers presented, nearly all are from Act II of the ballet (the March is from Act I). Everyone should own a copy of this music; but few should play it oftener than twice a year for complete enjoyment of it.

For the practical purposes of this review, we will compare the present set only with the recent Ormandy version (Vic. M-1020). The Ormandy set met with a cool and casual review in the December, 1945, issue of THE NEW RECORDS. After playing each of these sets side by side, we believe the choice lies with the recording technique. Rodzinski's reading of the lovely Waltz of the Flowers is noticeably nicer than Ormandy's; the other movements are give and take between the conductors, with Rodzinski faring slightly better. The Columbia recording is more mellow in most spots (except the Sugar-Plum Fairy); the Victor is bold and angular throughout, and not too well suited to the type of music. It would seem to be Columbia by a slight margin. S.

Massenet: Le Cid—Ballet Suite. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 3-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-1058. \$3.

Here is highly colorful ballet music that makes a thoroughly enjoyable album—and it is played capitally. The reproduction is full and spacious, with good resonance and bounce. No one who likes symphony orchestra music could fail to get a thrill from this one.

RCA Victor has had a complete version of the *Le Cid Ballet Suite* by Hertz and the San Francisco Orchestra (M-56) in their catalog for many years now; but it is pale fare for this day of realistic recording. The new version is quite welcome, for it has no competition.

Occasionally ballet music suffers a bit when we can only hear it and not see the dancers, too. In the present case, the music is sufficiently high in interest and color to be worth while by itself. The ballet music has no part in the story of the opera *Le Cid*, and is inserted as part of a festival scene in the second act. Massenet heeded the Parisian love for ballet in its operas, and was inspired to write this ballet while at a hotel in Marseilles. As the opera deals with a legendary Spanish hero, much of the music, including the ballet, has a Spanish flavor. The seven sections of the suite are presented here complete. S.

Schumann: Symphony No. 1 in B flat, Op. 38. Seven sides, and Brahms—trans. Leinsdorf: *Chorale Prelude No. 8, Op. 122* ("Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"). Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-617. \$4.85.

The "Spring" Symphony, as this is usually called, has had only one previous recording to our knowledge

—the one by Koussevitzky and the Boston Orchestra (Vic. M-655). It is stiff competition indeed for the present set, except for the fact that it is not available at this time. Leinsdorf tackles this work with an abundance of vigor and enthusiasm, and most of his energy is under pretty good control. The music can stand plenty of drive and punch, for it is light-hearted fare permeated with thoughts of spring and inspired by the new, green freshness of that season. All art forms inspired by spring usually brush aside weightier matters of life and are carried off by a light spirit. Schumann's letters concerning his first symphony attest that he was no exception to the artists who have been bitten by the spring bug. Leinsdorf communicates all this exciting springiness in his reading. The reproduction is full range, although a shade on the brittle side as far as the string tone is concerned . . . surfaces quiet in our set.

We have often wondered why the "orchestrators" did not turn to the organ chorale-preludes of Brahms. Leinsdorf did, and presents us with a tasty transcription of one of Brahms' loveliest. Based on the familiar Christmas chorale by Michael Praetorius, this one makes a welcome filler for the set. S.

Haydn: Symphony No. 97 in C major. (Salomon Set, No. 1.) London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1059. \$3.85.

(This annotation is reprinted from the February, 1946, issue. It appeared in this place when the important recording of this work was reviewed.)

We are delighted to greet this superb new recording of one of Haydn's jolliest symphonies. The only other recorded version that we know of was made about fifteen years ago by the London Symphony conducted by Hans Weisbach.

This work is the first of a series of twelve symphonies that Haydn wrote for Johann Peter Salomon between 1791 and 1795. It was first heard at one of the Salomon Concerts in London with the composer conducting at the piano and Salomon leading the orchestra. Haydn's usual slow introduction is somewhat shorter here than in many of his symphonies, and soon after the first record begins we are bouncing ahead as gayly as could be wished. The leisurely slow movement is full of effective touches, and the lively Minuet will start the feet to beating time. The amusing Finale, a lusty Rondo, is Haydn at his best, and contains some of his most skilful and effective music. This is a work that should be heard more frequently in the concert hall.

Certainly no more suitable conductor could have been chosen for this recording than Sir Thomas. To our mind he is the most able interpreter of Haydn available today. Almost perfect reproduction makes this a set that we can recommend without any hesitancy. R.

Teviot Bridge. One side, and **The Bottom of the Punch Bowl.** (Scottish Country Dances.) National Folk Dance Orchestra conducted by Stanford Robinson. 1-10" disc (C-DB293). \$1.25.

Teachers of folk dancing in our schools are always looking for recordings of new folk tunes, and so this disc, that recently arrived from England, will probably be of considerable interest. It appears in the English Columbia Educational Catalog and was recorded for use in the schools in the British Isles.

CONCERTO



Bach: Concerto No. 1 in D minor. Eugene Istomin (piano) with the Busch Chamber Players conducted by Adolf Busch. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-624. \$3.85.

Bach's *Concerto in D minor* for clavier or violin and strings is one of his most popular concertos, as well as being one of the most impressive. It, like five of the six other clavier concertos, was originally a violin concerto. Bach transcribed his violin concertos for piano as the occasion demanded, and the origins of this work, and the subsequent use of materials from it are well described in Paul Affelder's notes which accompany the album. Bach's use of a section of this or that previous work in a present composition is very involved, and has provided students and biographers with endless work. Columbia issued a reconstructed violin version of this work by Szigeti (M-418), which pleased some critics more than the Fischer piano version (Vic. M-252). As the Fischer version is not available at present, this clavier set has no competitors.

Having reached his majority this year, Eugene Istomin is carving an enviable career. After winning the Youth Contest award with the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1943, numerous engagements were open, and he has toured with the Busch Little Symphony. The presence of the Busch Chamber Players virtually guarantees an anything-but-dry performance of Bach. This group and Istomin give us a vital and stimulating account of the *D minor Concerto*, and we hope they have waxed some more music of the seventeenth or eighteenth century. The reproduction is clean and bright and the surfaces fairly good. S.

Delius: Violin Concerto. Albert Sammons (violin) with the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent. 3-12" discs (C-DX1160 to C-DX1162) in album. Also available in automatic sequence (C-DX8197 to C-DX8199). \$6.

No music lover is happier than the one to whom Delius' music has been revealed. The revelation can easily come from one of the shorter orchestral works or from the matchless *Appalachia*. The present work is for those whose affection for Delius has been established. Of the four concertos which Delius wrote, the

Violin Concerto is acknowledged to be the finest. It is in one continuous movement, although one can ascertain that it is in four sections. These four sections are contrasting to a certain degree; but the idea of the work as a whole is the important thing, for Delius was little concerned with contrasts as we usually consider them in the movements of a symphony or concerto, i. e., an allegro first movement, slow second movement, scherzo third movement, rondo fourth movement, etc. In this concerto the work progresses from the initial idea, and grows and expands in a most logical evolution, with contrasts provided most naturally, and not according to formula. Much of the work is subtle in characteristic Delius manner; but there is enough "beef" here and there to balance it. Surely Delius owes little to other composers for his inimitable style, particularly in his later works. Nature was a great inspiration for him, and his music is hued with refined impressions his temperament absorbed from nature. Some say his music is pictorial, and to an extent much of it is. To us it is always lovely and capable of great enjoyment.

This is the first recording of the *Violin Concerto*, indeed we believe it is the first recording of any Delius concerto. The performance is entirely sympathetic to the music, and does not strive to be virtuosic for virtuosity's sake. The orchestra weaves along with the violin to complete a gorgeous tapestry, and the reproduction is of continental standard. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: Quintet in C major, Op. 29. Budapest Quartet with Milton Katims (viola). 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-623. \$4.85.

Beethoven's only original work for this combination of instruments, the *Quintet, Op. 29*, is rarely played in this country. It is surely an enjoyable work, rather more developed than the *Op. 18 Quartets*, but without the mastery of the *Op. 59* or later chamber music works. It has a logical place in Beethoven's chamber music, coming, as it does, between the earlier and the *Rasoumovsky Quartets*. Little has been unearthed concerning the work, except that it was written in 1801, a prolific year for Beethoven. It has been called the *Storm Quintet*, because of the suggestion of a storm in the finale; but to us it is a mild suggestion indeed. It is in the conventional four movements, and sustains interest nicely throughout.

Any recording by the Budapest group is to be welcomed warmly, for their performances are uniquely fine. This set is no exception, and the reproduction does full justice. It has the ideal balance for chamber music, and the result is distinctly "chamber music" as it comes from the speaker. Why Columbia elected to record this again we cannot fathom. The Leners, with Primrose, made a highly satisfactory set some years ago (Col. M-294), which would seem to answer the purpose; we know of no other recordings. However,

here it is, and it is very fine. Now we can turn our attention to some of the other works which need a first or a new recording. The surfaces of our copy are quite smooth and quiet, which added considerably to our pleasure, especially in the lovely second movement, a quiet *adagio molto espressivo*, which the players accomplish with consummate skill (i. e., side four). S.

Moeran: Trio in G major. Jean Pougnet (violin), Frederick Riddle (viola), Anthony Pini (violin-cello). 3-12" discs in album (C-DX8153 to C-DX8155). (Automatic sequence.) \$6.

Perhaps those venturesome souls who took a chance and bought copies of the HMV recording of the *Moeran Symphony in G minor*, when it was received from England a couple of years ago, would be sufficiently interested in this present-day English composer to add another work by him to their collections.

The present trio is one of his earlier works and dates from 1920. It is much easier to appreciate than the symphony. It seems to be based on folk tunes and contains much music of a most melodic character. Most anyone may enjoy this trio—certainly anyone who appreciates chamber music.

It has been beautifully played by the fine artists who have recorded it and the reproduction is of the best.

OPERA



Verdi: La Traviata—potpourri. (Sung in German.) Berlin State Opera soloists, chorus and orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70033). \$2.50.

Bizet: Carmen—potpourri. (Sung in German.) Eva Liebenberg (Carmen); Anni Frind (Micaëla); Helge Rosewaenge (Don José); Wilhelm Guttman (Escamillo) with chorus and orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70053). \$2.50.

These are Vinylite nonbreakable repressings from the famous Telefunken recordings that were imported from Germany before the war. The soloists on both records are of high calibre and the recording has been most artistically accomplished.

Puccini: La Boheme—Oh! Dio, Mimi (Finale, Act IV). (Sung in Italian.) Rosetta Pampanini, Luigi Marini, Luba Mirella, Gino Vanelli, Tancredi Passero, and Aristide Baracchi, with orchestra. One side, and **Puccini: Manon Lescaut**—Intermezzo. Milan Symphony Orchestra conducted by Cav. Lorenzo Molajoli. 1-12" disc (C-9858). \$2.

From time to time copies of this recording of the final scene from *La Boheme* have been imported from abroad and have always been quickly picked up by record collectors in this country. A recent shipment included a few more copies. Those who are interested will doubtless be pleased to know that it is presently available.

CHORAL



Nightingale (Folk Song). One side, and **Listov**—arr. Salama: **Song of the Tachanka**. (Sung in Russian.) General Platoff: Don Cossack Chorus conducted by Nicholas Kostrukoff. 1-12" disc (V-11-9220). \$1.

Typical Russian melodies sung by the famous General Platoff Don Cossack Chorus—those who are making a collection of this music will find the present disc well up to the standard set by the several previous recordings.

VOCAL



Songs of Rachmaninoff. (Sung in Russian.) Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano) with piano accompaniments by Erich Itor Kahn. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-625. \$3.85.

C-71807D *O, Cease Thy Singing, Maiden Fair*, Op. 4, No. 4. One side, and *The Soldier's Bride*, Op. 8, No. 6, and *All Things Depart*, Op. 26, No. 15.

C-71808D *In the Silence of the Night*, Op. 4, No. 3, and *The Answer*, Op. 21, No. 4. One side, and *Before My Window*, Op. 26, No. 10, and *Sorrow in Springtime*, Op. 21, No. 12.

C-71809D *Floods of Spring*, Op. 14, No. 4, and *Lilacs*, Op. 21, No. 5. One side, and *The Drooping Corn*, Op. 4, No. 5.

There is no denying Miss Tourel's feeling and sympathy for these lovely songs. She is far better equipped vocally than Nina Kochetz, who made an album for Schirmer some years ago which contained some of these songs as well as others of Rachmaninoff. There have been a few recordings here and there of Rachmaninoff songs; but this is the best group ever offered. All others have suffered mainly from undistinguished voices, poor reproduction, or both. We felt several times, as we played through this set, that Miss Tourel was driving the effects a bit too hard; but there is much impassioned writing here, and our interpreter's enthusiasm is relentless. For sake of contrast, more passages of soft, reflective singing, and restraint would have balanced matters for us. With the exception of a few low tones, Miss Tourel's voice is clear, fresh, and even; and she fashions some fine phrases.

The contents of this album present some familiar songs and some of the lesser known works. Although, with one or two exceptions, all of these songs have been recorded previously, there are several which rarely appear on recital programs. Of the seventy-six songs that Rachmaninoff composed, hardly a dozen are in common use. They are all quite singable, and have one thing in common—words and music are well

knit together.

As might be supposed, the piano accompaniments of the Rachmaninoff songs have much to do with the mood of the texts, and in the present set are admirably played by Mr. Kahn. The reproduction is forward and full; surfaces are fair, a few crackle a little. S.

Songs of Cole Porter. Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano) with orchestra conducted by Sylvan Shulman. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-630. \$3.85.

Certainly if Miss Stevens loses her job at the Metropolitan she can get a good one in any first class night club. Aided and abetted by Sylvan Shulman and his orchestra she puts over these Cole Porter favorites in the approved supper club style—and how! She croons; she lingers fondly over each word in the most sensuous manner; all the best modern tricks are displayed; and she makes the most of her lower "tenor" range in legato after legato. If we could just forget that Miss Stevens is an operatic artist, we could easily acclaim her as the best female crooner of the day.

When a really fine artist tries to step into a role for which she is not suited and attempts to sing popular songs of the day in the operatic manner, we have little sympathy for her; but when she does night club stuff better than the seasoned vaudeville performer, that is something else. In the present album she is beating top-notch cafe singers at their own game.

The Cole Porter tunes in this album are: *In the Still of the Night*; *I've Got You Under My Skin*; *Ev'rything I Love*; *What Is This Thing Called Love?*; *Begin the Beguine*; and *Night and Day*. R.

Jeanette MacDonald's Operetta Favorites. Jeanette MacDonald (soprano) with Russ Case and his Orchestra and Chorus. 3-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-1071. \$3.

Jeanette MacDonald is unquestionably one of the most popular artists in the field of the operetta, and an album of selections by her of Victor Herbert, Jerome Kern and Rudolf Friml melodies should have a wide and continued appeal. This is particularly true if Miss MacDonald is up to her usual standard and the supporting orchestra is adequate. We are happy to say that this is the case with the present recordings.

Miss MacDonald has chosen for this album: *Sweetheart Waltz* and *Romany Life* by Victor Herbert; *They Didn't Believe Me* and *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes* by Jerome Kern; and *Donkey Serenade* and *Giannina Mia* by Rudolf Friml.

Friml: Ma Belle (from "Three Musketeers"). One side, and **Juanita** (Trad.). Robert Merrill (baritone) with orchestra conducted by H. Leopold Spitalny. 1-10" disc (V-10-1239). 75c.

Robert Merrill is gaining daily in popularity and his many admirers will doubtless welcome his fine recordings of these familiar songs. He is well supported by an adequate orchestra under the direction of H. Leopold Spitalny.

Milloecker: Der Bettelstudent—potpourri. Soloists, chorus, and orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70027). \$2.50.

J. Strauss: Der Zigeunerbaron—potpourri. Operetta ensemble, chorus, and orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70028). \$2.50.

Kalman: Die Csardasfuerstin—potpourri. Operetta ensemble, chorus, and orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70029). \$2.50.

Zeller: Der Vogelhaendler—potpourri. Soloists, chorus, and orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R7030). \$2.

Lehar: Die Lustige Witwe—potpourri. Soloists, chorus, and orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70031). \$2.50.

J. Strauss: Die Fledermaus (Rosalinda)—potpourri. Soloists, chorus, and Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70032). \$2.50.

J. Strauss: Eine Nacht in Venedig—potpourri. Friedrich Eugen Engels (tenor) with chorus and orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70051). \$2.50.

Lehar: Der Graf von Luxemburg—potpourri. Martina Wulf and Hugo Welfing with orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70052). \$2.50.

(All the above selections sung in German.)

Before the war, Telefunken was noted for its superb recordings of selections from various continental operettas. Thousands of these records were imported and readily sold to those interested in music of this character. Fine soloists and excellent choruses were engaged for these recordings.

The group of discs listed above are American pressings or dubbings of these famous records. Those that are listed at \$2.50 each are pressed on the new nonbreakable Vinylite; the other are shellac pressings. For those who are making a collection of vocal operetta potpourries, these recordings are highly recommended.

Deep River (arr. Burleigh). One side, and **MacGimsey: Thunderin', Wonderin'**. Ezio Pinza (bass) with piano accompaniment by Gibner King. 1-10" disc (C-17383D). 75c.

Except to show his great versatility, we can think of no other reason for Mr. Pinza's choice of the selections on the present disc. Perhaps there are those who will find his renditions interesting, but we are not among that group, if it exists. When we want to hear *Deep River*, we'll turn to the Paul Robeson or Marian Anderson recordings.

Lehár: The Merry Widow—The Merry Widow Waltz and Vilia (one side each). Eleanor Steber (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Jay Blackton. 1-12" disc (V-11-9218). \$1.

Merry Widow fans will thrill to Miss Steber's renditions of two of the best known selections from this ever-popular operetta. Jay Blackton's fine orchestral support adds to the attractiveness of this lovely record.

"By Request." James Melton (tenor) with orchestra conducted by David Broekman. 3-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-1060. \$3.

James Melton has made better recordings than those contained in the present album. However, the selections in "By Request" are all popular ones and so we suppose that his many fans will accept this package with some enthusiasm, perhaps, more enthusiasm than we can muster. We were rather favorably impressed with his renditions of *The Hills of Home* and *All Day on the Prairie*; but for the rest, which include *The Way You Look Tonight*; *Siboney*; *Make Believe*; and *It's a Grand Night for Singing*, we have scant praise.

Moore: Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms. One side, and **Moore: Oft in the Stilly Night**. Christopher Lynch (tenor) with piano accompaniment by Gerald Moore. 1-10" disc (V-10-1247). 75c.

Christopher Lynch is said to have been much admired by the late John McCormack and also that he received helpful guidance from that great artist. His first recordings were released in England during the spring and were greeted with high praise by the English critics. Probably because Mr. Lynch is planning to come to America, RCA Victor was so prompt in repressing the present disc. Through this record, many Americans will have an opportunity of hearing this young artist before he appears here in person.

His voice is of excellent quality, even throughout its range, and the familiar ballads which he has chosen for this record are sung with a fine sense of artistry. Much may be expected from him as he matures, he is in his early twenties, and we shall be looking forward to his future recordings with more than ordinary interest.

PIANO



Piano Music of Chopin. Maryla Jonas (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-626. \$3.85.

C-71810D *Mazurka No. 49 in F minor, Op. 68, No. 4, and Mazurka No. 19 in B minor, Op. 30, No. 2*. One side, and *Mazurka No. 43 in G minor, Op. 67, No. 2*.

C-71811D *Nocturne No. 19 in E minor, Op. 72, No. 1*. One side, and *Nocturne No. 20 in C sharp minor, Op. Posth.*

C-71812D *Waltz No. 13 in D flat, Op. 70, No. 3, and Waltz No. 11 in G flat, Op. 70, No. 1*. One side, and *Polonaise No. 9 in B flat, Op. 71, No. 2*.

With the exception of the *Waltz in D flat*, this album contains some of the less hackneyed Chopin, and will be unfamiliar to a majority of persons. We hope this will not prevent anyone who likes Chopin's piano works from hearing the set. Maryla Jonas' record

debut is an event to be welcomed. Her playing is unique in many respects. While listening to this set we were never aware of any technical difficulties that may be in the music, for her playing is entirely above mechanical things. The interpretations are not showy or superficial at any time; yet they are very individual and personalized and rather introspective. There are certain qualities which reveal a feminine player; but if they were absent then probably absent, too, would be the subtleties of her art and the superlatively soft phrases. Hers is a well developed technique, secure and with great control of tone, upon which is laid the most sensitive personal readings.

No Hollywood scenario was ever more colorful or dramatic than the life of Maryla Jonas. The notes accompanying the album give a brief account of her internment during the war, her release, and her first concerts in this country. It is indeed a moving story, and Miss Jonas is to be admired for her fortitude, as is Artur Rubinstein for his knowing assistance to a fellow Pole. We look forward eagerly to more recordings by Maryla Jonas, who may be the outstanding woman pianist of our day, and hope the next one will be a composition of large form such as a concerto.

S.

Szymanowski: Four Mazurkas, Op. 50. Artur Rubinstein (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-9219). \$1.

Karol Szymanowski (1883-1937) was the most important of the modern Polish composers, but little of his music has been heard in America. The present mazurkas were dedicated to the pianist who plays them so felicitously on this charming disc. The first two of the group of four were played for Columbia by Jakob Gimpel several years ago.

Szymanowski's music is not too easy for the average American to grasp but the discerning music lover will find the present recording worthy of his investigation. The piano reproduction is superb.

VIOLIN



Paganini Recital. Ruggiero Ricci (violin) with piano accompaniments by Louis Persinger. 3-12" discs in album. Vox Set No. 614. \$3.85.

VX-614 *La Campanella*. One side, and *Moses Fantasy*.

VX-615 *Moto Perpetuo*. One side, and *Caprices Nos. 13 and 20*.

VX-616 *The Witches' Dance*.

The *Moto Perpetuo* alone is worth the price of this album, and the *La Campanella* runs it a close second for thrilling fiddling. We had the pleasure of playing these for someone, without his knowing who the violinist was, and he declared it must be Heifetz—who else could do it so adroitly? Well, it seems young Ricci can, and the reproduction of this set is nearly as amazing as the playing. We tried it out on several large phonographs, and it is truly an eyebrow lifter.

The piano is in good balance and sounds well; but the violin seems to be within arm's reach. The surfaces are satisfactory, some are actually good.

Ruggiero Ricci had a sensational debut at the age of nine, and is still, at twenty-six, bringing audiences to their feet cheering. Paganini's music bristles with difficulties, and numbers such as *The Witches' Dance* are fiendishly difficult. Paganini's ability to do uncanny things with a violin is now legendary; his music is filled with technical pitfalls which are disastrous to any but the most agile of violinists. For all its mechanical devices, his music has many warm passages and melodic lines which reveal the Italian tradition. Ricci encompasses the music completely, not neglecting the lush melodies wherever they occur. His accompaniments are played by Louis Persinger, who was his teacher. Congratulations to all concerned for this album.

As the last record is the only one with a single composition occupying two sides, this set is suitable for automatic or manual operation. S.

CHILDREN



Wilde: The Happy Prince. Bing Crosby and Orson Welles, with sound effects; musical score by Bernard Herrmann, directed by Victor Young. 2-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-420. \$2.50.

Here is a Bing Crosby album in which Bing doesn't sing. He and Orson Welles, with the aid of a small supporting cast, give a superb performance of Oscar Wilde's famous fairy tale, *The Happy Prince*. Bing takes the part of the Prince and Orson Welles is the narrator. Another in Decca's growing list of exceptionally fine sets of records for children.

MISCELLANEOUS



Harris-Benjamin Album. William Primrose (violinist) with piano accompaniments by Johana Harris and Vladimir Sokoloff. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1061. \$4.85.

Benjamin: *Elegy, Waltz, and Toccata*. Four sides, and Harris: *Soliloquy and Dance*.

Each of these original compositions for viola is but a few years old. The young Australian, Britten, is not generally conceded to be a front rank contemporary composer; yet some of his large output has been accepted cordially and his *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge* won a great deal of favor. The present work for viola was written in Vancouver, B. C., during the summer of 1942. It is deserving of several hearings to fully appreciate all that has been packed in its three connected episodes. The writing for viola is well turned and contrasts abound in the pattern of the piece. Vladimir Sokoloff supplies a com-

petent accompaniment.

Roy Harris is well known to American audiences, and has achieved quite a reputation as one of our most brilliant contemporaries. The *Soliloquy and Dance*, published in 1941, is a cleverly contrived bit of abstract music. The *Soliloquy* commences quietly and while the viola continues on its way, the piano background builds up to a stirring climax, after which the composition fades away quietly. The *Dance* is a jovial affair which opens up with a splendid three-part fugue on the piano, the viola enters gayly and from there on it is a series of ingenious variations and alterations, a counter melody enters the picture and more combinations result. The music drives right through to a brilliant conclusion. Mrs. Roy Harris handles the tricky piano parts well.

The master violist of the day, William Primrose, plays these two contemporary masterpieces with superb finish. The program notes accompanying this set give interesting details concerning the violas used for the recordings. The reproduction is nicely accomplished; the surfaces acceptable. We were surprisingly pleased with this album, and believe a number of persons seeking something unusual will also find it enjoyable.

Square Dances. Al MacLeod's Country Dance Band, Ed Durlacher (caller). 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set A-474. \$3.85.

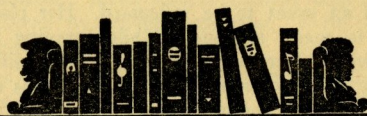
There have been numerous calls for square dance tunes on twelve-inch records. Decca heard the call and this album is the result. All of the dances have calls by Ed Durlacher and a booklet giving instructions for each is included with the album.

The selections are: *She'll Be Comin' 'Round the Mountain When She Comes*; *Billy Boy*; *The Grapevine Twist*; *Dip and Dive*; *Mademoiselle from Armentieres*; and *Cowboy's Dream*.

Country Dances. The Top Hands, with calls by Ed Durlacher. 4-10" discs in album. Sonora Set MS-479. \$2.75.

Ed Durlacher, famous for having introduced mass square dancing to the city slickers of New York and making them like it, has arranged this set of discs for Sonora. Directions for performing each of these dances will be found on an extra flyleaf in this album. We are not expert at square dancing but the directions seem reasonably simply to us and as far as we know they are okeh.

The selections chosen for the present collections are: *Red River Valley*; *Nellie Bly*; *Uptown and Downtown*; *Loobie Lou*; *Skip to My Lou*; *Virginia Reel*; *Back to Back*; and *You Did It So Well*.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

Letters of Composers. An Anthology 1603-1945. Compiled and edited by Gertrude Norman and Miriam Lubell Shrifte. xviii + 422 + xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

The Borzoi Book of Ballets. By Grace Robert. xvii + 362 + xxiii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.50.

Listening to the Orchestra. By Kitty Barne. 299 pp. Illustrated. The Bobbs-Merrill Company (Indianapolis). Price \$2.75.

Listening to Music Creatively. By Edwin J. Stringham. xx + 479 pp. Illustrated. Prentice-Hall, Inc. (New York.) Price \$5.

Talking Wax. By Leroy Hughbanks. 142 pp. The Hobson Book Press (New York). Price \$2.50.

Sergei Prokofiev: His Musical Life. By Israel V. Nestyev. Translated from the Russian by Rose Prokofieva. Introduction by Sergei Eisenstein. xxvii + 193 + xiv pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

Impresario. A memoir by S. Hurok in collaboration with Ruth Goode. 291 pp. Illustrated. Random House (New York). Price \$3.

Bad Boy of Music. By George Antheil. 378 pp. Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. (Garden City, N. Y.). Price \$3.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Aeol, B—Brunswick, BL—Biblotone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargall, MU—Musieraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiotunken, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

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OCTOBER 1946

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THERE has recently been released one of the most important albums of historic recordings—perhaps the most important. It contains the speeches that the various delegates made when they signed the United Nations Charter at San Francisco on 26 June 1945. Most of the speeches are quite short so that several of them may be placed on one record-side—fifty in all on the 14 sides of seven 12-inch discs. Each delegate is introduced in English and then proceeds to make his remarks in his native tongue—Dr. Wellington Koo, speaking for China, is the exception, he spoke in English. The records are housed in a beautiful blue cloth-bound album stamped in gold.

It is difficult to appraise the historic importance and value of this set of records. If the United Nations Organization survives, and God grant that it does, the men who signed its charter, and what they said upon doing so, will live in the memory of all ages to come. In that case these recordings will probably be the most important ones ever made. In any case, this album deserves a place in the libraries and schools of higher education throughout the world. We understand that only a limited number of these albums are available. The price, including tax, is \$35 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

* * *

Handel—By Herbert Weinstock. xvi+326+xlili pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.00.

Those of us who own a copy of Herbert Weinstock's definitive biography of Tchaikovsky, which was published a couple of years ago, became anxious to inspect a copy of his book on Handel, as soon as we heard he was working on the life of that important and interesting musical personality of the 18th century. It is now available and we are happy to report that Mr. Weinstock has done as fine a job with

his second biography as he did with his first.

He has painstakingly covered Handel's life from the cradle to the grave, drawing most of his material from first sources. His text is interspersed with much Handel correspondence which helps to give the reader a vivid picture of the times in which his hero lived. It would seem at first glance that this book might be very heavy going because of the vast amount of factual data, but we did not find it so. When we finished it, we felt that we had a very good idea of the musical life of the period. We rather imagined that we had accompanied Handel on his many journeys, shared with him his failures and rejoiced with him in his successes.

From a musical standpoint this book is of prime value. The author has carefully considered all of Handel's important works, and in addition, scores of others that have long since been forgotten. A list of each work mentioned in the text is set forth in a special index. An extensive bibliography and a carefully prepared general index add greatly to the usefulness of this fine volume.

* * *

From time to time there have appeared on the market various record indexes for record collectors to make up their own catalogs. None of them has seemed entirely practical to us. The other day we ran across one manufactured by The Recordplate Co. This index was very likely designed by a person who has had considerable experience in cataloging libraries of records.

This index consists of a multiple-ring binder (6" x 8 1/2"), an index, and a supply of index sheets (5" x 2 1/2"). The binder is made of a good grade of imitation leather, the index has alphabetical tabs, and the index sheets are printed on heavy ledger paper. Each record or album set should be listed on an index sheet

and these may be placed in the binder so that twelve record titles, the respective artists and composers are visible at a glance. These sheets can be used to index by any system, and also to cross reference between two or more categories as composer, title, and artist. All in all, it seems to us that this is the simplest and most efficient system for any collector to use in making up a catalog of his recordings.

The Recordplate Record Index Book complete with alphabetical index and 150 index sheets costs \$2.95 (postpaid within U. S. A.). Additional index sheets are 80c per 100. Although this is a new item, we understand that many dealers throughout the country have these index books in stock for your inspection.

* * *

FERRUCCIO TAGLIAVINI. A name that may not be familiar to you now but one that will shortly be on the lips of every lover of Italian opera in America. Tagliavini has been signed to sing leading tenor roles with the Metropolitan this season and is already in this country. It is reported that he will sing several times with the Philadelphia La Scala Opera Company which is now on tour. These performances will of course precede his joining the Metropolitan.

Recently four of his records arrived in a shipment from Italy and those who have heard them are overwhelmingly enthusiastic about them. Here is another case where an important new artist is first introduced to music lovers in this country via his recordings. Max de Schauensee reviews these discs in the present issue under **OPERA**.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of **THE NEW RECORDS**. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

* * *

IMPORTANT NOTICE. All prices quoted in **THE NEW RECORDS** are list prices exclusive of excise tax. In ordering please add 5 per cent to list prices quoted.

ORCHESTRA



Grieg: Symphonic Dances, Op. 64 (On Norwegian Themes). Five sides, and **Liadov: Baba Yaga, Op. 56**. Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fabien Sevitzky. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1066. \$3.85.

For those not familiar with this music, we would say at once that the title is a bit misleading. Many will believe we have here a set of dances strung together, resulting largely in a tinkling chain of rhythmic episodes. Not so entirely, for this music has a surprising strength and virility about it. The work is divided into four movements of contrasting tempos, giving it a symphonic structure. The entire business is of course based on Norwegian themes—folk themes—which lend a characteristic color to the work. All of Norway's landscape and countryside scenes seem to move before us as the music progresses. The music is generally robustly scored, not thickly, but brilliantly and with Grieg's own brand of color. It was originally two-piano music, which he later scored for full orchestra. Obviously, it abounds in infectious rhythm and motion, and as a whole it is far from dull listening; in fact, it is highly enjoyable.

Sevitzky can always be depended on for a vital reading of any work he performs, and he can also be depended on for an unhackneyed subject. We admire a man of his ability and stature for being enterprising. His reading of the present work reveals all of its charm and beauty, capturing the native spirit of it completely. The reproduction is well accomplished and the surfaces fair. An earlier version, now discontinued, by Dobrowen on Decca was very poor.

The sixth-side filler for this set is an interesting little tone poem by the gifted Russian composer, Liadov. The music is based on a Russian fairy tale about a fiend who eats people, etc. Sevitzky plays the work nicely, in its first domestic recording. This album is a most welcome addition to recorded literature. S.

Khrennikov: Symphony No. 1, Op. 4, in B flat minor. (Third movement only.) U.S.S.R. State Orchestra. Two sides, and **Khrennikov: "The Night Breeze Rustles the Leaves"** (from the incidental music to Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing"). Prof. A. Doliva (Baritone) with Orchestra of the USSR Radio Committee conducted by Prof. Orlov. One side, and **Khachaturian: "Lezhinka"** (from Dance Suite No. 5). Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra conducted by V. Nebolsin. 2-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 753. \$5.

This album gives us an opportunity of hearing a few recordings that were made in the U. S. S. R. While the recordings were made abroad, the records were pressed in America on Vinylite.

The first disc contains the final movement of Khrennikov's *Symphony No. 1 in B flat minor, Op. 4*. (The

labels indicate that the complete symphony is contained on this single disc. This is, of course, incorrect.) Fortunately for us the final movement is a rather complete little piece in itself and gives us a chance to appraise the work of this young Soviet composer. It isn't world shaking music but it is interesting and worthy of the attention of students of modern music. Khrennikov was born in Moscow in 1913. He graduated from the Moscow Conservatory in 1936 and was awarded the Stalin Prize in 1942 for his music for the film *The Pigs and the Shepherd*. His *Symphony No. 1* owes much to Shostakovich, to whom it is dedicated. It was introduced to America in 1936 by Leopold Stokowski, who directed the Philadelphia Orchestra in the first performance of the work in this country. It was greeted with reasonable enthusiasm.

The second disc in this album contains a baritone solo from incidental music that Khrennikov wrote for Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* and a dance movement from Khachaturian's *Dance Suite No. 5*. The former left us quite cold; it seemed to us little better than a pleasing ditty with a jiggling tune. The latter introduces to us the work of Aram Khachaturian, who was born in Tiflis in 1904 and graduated from the Moscow Conservatory in 1934. The present little piece is based on the folklore of his native Armenia, and while it is of little importance, it is not without interest.

All of these recordings, while not up to American standards, are not bad, and will doubtless be of interest to those who would like to know what is going on in the recording world on the other side of the iron curtain. R.

Strauss, J.: Die Fledermaus—Du und Du—Waltz Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Kleiber. 1–12" disc (V-C-1676). \$1.90.

In a batch of records that recently arrived from abroad were a few copies of this well-known Strauss waltz. It is given a thrilling performance by the Vienna Philharmonic under the distinguished direction of Erich Kleiber. Strauss waltz fans will doubtless welcome the opportunity of adding this one to their collections.

Balfe: Bohemian Girl—Overture. John Barbirolli and his Orchestra. 1–12" disc (V-C-2635). \$1.90.

Oldtimers will doubtless be thrilled to know that a recording of the overture to this famous old opera, that so delighted our great-grandfathers, is presently available. A few copies of this disc arrived in a recent shipment from abroad. It is well recorded and played with the proper spirit by Mr. Barbirolli and his men.

Memory Waltzes. Frank DeVol and his Orchestra. 4–10" discs in album. Capitol Set BD-31. \$3.15

Frank DeVol has chosen eight ever-popular waltzes and made his own arrangements *a la Kostelanetz* and presents them with his symphonic style orchestra on these discs. They should make ideal dinner music

and as such they are highly recommended.

The selections are: *Wonderful One*; *Shadow Waltz*; *I'll See You Again*; *Three o'Clock in the Morning*; *One Night of Love*; *Parlez moi d'amour*; *In a Little Spanish Town*; and *Jeannine, I Dream of Lilac Time*.

CONCERTO



Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18.

Artur Rubinstein (piano) with the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Goldschmann. Nine sides, and **Chopin: Impromptu No. 3 in G flat, Op. 51.** Artur Rubinstein (piano). 5–12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1075. \$5.85.

And here is the fifth (no less) domestic recording of the ever popular Rachmaninoff Concerto No. 2, to further bewilder the collector who is trying to decide what he considers the definitive performance on records! We have had the Rachmaninoff-Stokowski version, the Moisevitch-Goehr, the Sandor-Rodzinski, and the List-Wallenstein. And now here comes Artur Rubinstein, the great Polish pianist, casting his glove into the arena, aided and abetted by Vladimir Goldschmann and the NBC Symphony Orchestra!

Without further delay be it said that the present album contains an outstanding performance between its covers—the teaming of a master pianist with a conductor who thoroughly and tastefully realizes the romantic surges of Slavic music. The recording itself is of crystalline clarity—the balance between solo instrument and orchestra, exemplary.

Rubinstein's feeling for atmosphere, his exquisite tone coloring and his consummate technique are ever apparent. This music, despite its obvious appeal, is no easy matter to play well.

We would say (and this is nothing but a personal suggestion) that if a collector has both money and inclination, he would do well to own both the historic Rachmaninoff-Stokowski version and the present album, which is an example of up-to-date recording. Should he have limited money and inclination, we would be sorely tempted to shove the present album, well wrapped, across the counter at him.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Kreisler: Concerto in C (In the style of Vivaldi).

Fritz Kreisler (violin) with the Victor String Orchestra conducted by Donald Voorhees. Three sides, and **Kreisler: Chanson Louis XIII and Pavane** (In the style of Couperin). Fritz Kreisler (violin) with the Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Donald Voorhees. 2–12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1070. \$2.85.

Kreisler or Vivaldi, that is the question! It was no question in the early part of this century, for everyone thought it was Vivaldi. The compositions in this album are from the group which Kreisler composed and passed off as transcriptions of original manuscripts by Pugnani, Vivaldi, Couperin, and others. All of the

critics fell for it perfectly for thirty years, until the discovery was made that Kreisler himself penned these works in the style of the masters. There is no denying the fact that this Vivaldi *Concerto in C* sounds exactly like a Vivaldi work, with the added spaciousness that would admittedly come into a transcription for modern orchestra. If you like the style of Vivaldi, there is no need to shy away from this set because Kreisler wrote it, for the flavor you like is here. It can stand beside any of the genuine Vivaldi sets in your collection. In fact, it is more desirable than some of the overblown orchestral versions of Vivaldi's works which are currently available.

In three movements, allegro, andante, and allegro, the concerto makes pleasant listening for those who like a violin work without the usual cadenzas and pyrotechnics in which fiddlers love to indulge themselves. In this case it's all music, and Kreisler performs it with his customary skill and lovely tone. We are especially fond of music of Vivaldi and Corelli, and anything that sounds like it immediately finds a warm spot in our heart. This set will join their other works in our collection, and while we thank Kreisler, we continue to think of it as Vivaldi.

The fourth side fillers are charming little bon-bons also from the spurious classical manuscripts, although the Couperin *Chanson* is supposedly taken from a traditional melody (whatever that may add to its authenticity). Scored for full orchestra, they are a nice bit of embroidery well placed in this album. S.

Mozart: Concerto in E flat, K. 365 (two pianos and orchestra). Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin (duo-pianists) with the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-628. \$3.85.

The opening part of this work always sounds like Beethoven to us. The second and third movements are truly Mozart in his best Andante and Rondo moments. Vronsky and Babin turn in a finely styled reading, and together with Mitropoulos' sensitive accompaniment, the effect is well done Mozart. We can recommend this set, therefore, for its interpretation and also for its reproduction, which together make it the most desirable of the recordings of this work, despite a few crackling surfaces. Artur and Karl Ulrich Schnabel once recorded the work, as did José and Amparo Iturbi. Neither sets are currently available, although Victor may re-press the Iturbis' set some day. The Iturbis were well recorded; but their playing was generally considered somewhat outside the style of Mozart. We preferred to think of it as a characteristic contemporary method of playing Mozart. Vronsky and Babin preserve the lyrical qualities of Mozart and the reproduction carries through, too, with a round piano tone.

Writers of program notes for this work usually outline the trouble Mozart had with one Josepha Aurnhammer, a homely though amorous young lady with

whom he did some two-piano work. They gave several concerts, at one of which they premiered the present work. Mozart's letters during the time he knew Josepha provide amusing reading, for his scathing and complimentary remarks were libelous. S.



PIANO

Beethoven: Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13 ("Pathétique"). Erno Balogh (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Vox Set No. 611. \$2.85.

Why the major record companies have not issued recordings of this popular work remains a mystery. It is surely time to start a series of releases, in fact, it was time years ago. A fair version by Bachaus was available on some early Victor records; but its reproduction was thin and nearly as poor as the early Decca set by Szreter. Several good sets have been made in England, available only by import. Now Vox has the lead domestically with the present release. As a performance it does not deviate much from a straight, studied, well played reading of the score. The general framework is small, and those amateurs who have practised impassioned, heaven-storming interpretations will feel Balogh quite restrained in his conception. Actually this set is ideal for a student to study, as it clearly presents the technical details nicely worked out; and on it the student may impose his own tastes and ideas of interpretation. For those who do not play, but wish to own a recording of the *Pathétique* to listen to, it is best that they hear this set first. If they want a thunderous performance which will run chills up and down their spines they may not be satisfied with this one. Now that Vox has broken the ice, we presume several more *Pathétiques* will appear in a year, among which will possibly be one more dramatic.

The first sets produced of this work had a tremendous amount of surface noise and a bad second side. The review set used here was from a later batch and has these faults corrected. The reproduction and surfaces are not of our best domestic variety; but they did not impair our enjoyment of the set. We felt that the lovely sustained melody notes of the second movement did not ring and resonate as they do in a concert hall, indicating a studio recording. S.

Bach: Three-Part Inventions. Erno Balogh (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 770. \$4.60.

The previous release of Mr. Balogh's album of *Two-Part Inventions* was accorded some high praise. We now have the *Three-Part Inventions* to complete the series. Alexandre Borowsky recorded the complete set for Polydor some years ago; but we have not had the pleasure of hearing those records as yet. This is the first domestic release of all the *Inventions*. Their appeal to the average record collector is limited, and

it would seem their greatest advantage will be to students. Mr. Average Listener will find little exciting or interesting in these works, unless he is familiar with the music, and can appreciate the remarkable masterpieces of form which they are. A knowledge of the themes, counterthemes, and motives is practically essential.

Mr. Balogh plays the Inventions with straightforward clarity and restraint, and keeps clear of the *tempo rubato*, excessive *legato*, *piano* and other devices which are considered alien to a correct exposition of these works. Busoni, in his edition of the Inventions, claims that their style is characterized above all others by manliness, energy, breadth, and loftiness. And we suppose many persons would add dryness, for their lack of appreciation and knowledge pointed out above. Here, then, is an item to acquire only if you know the music; for if you are casting about for some nice piano music off the well-beaten track, keep on moving and try some Scriabin.

Disc has reproduced the piano fairly well and supplied copious surface noise, too. The lack of resonance in Mr. Balogh's piano does not hinder this type of music; but it is not favorable to today's ears. S.

Field: Nocturne in E major "Midi" in Rondo Form.

One side, and **Field: Nocturne in E minor.** Denis Matthews (piano). 1-12" disc (C-DX1228). \$2.

Little of the music of John Field (1782-1837) is available on records and so the present disc, which recently arrived from England, is of unusual interest. Field was born in Dublin but spent a great deal of his adult life in Russia, where he died in 1837. He was an accomplished pianist and teacher as well as a composer of note. In addition to his many pieces for solo piano he has seven piano concerti to his credit. It is said that in playing he had a beautiful singing tone and a most perfect *legato*. The present soloist, Denis Matthews, must have had this in mind when he made these recordings, for we do not know when we have heard such smooth, even, and totally charming playing—no fuss and feathers—just music that puts one in the most tranquil of moods. One is delightfully relaxed when these pleasing little pieces are finished.

It is said that Chopin and those who followed him owe much to the Irish composer, who is now practically forgotten by the music-loving public. R.

VOCAL



Victor Herbert Melodies. Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) with orchestra and chorus conducted by Russ Case. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1069. \$3.85.

A lot of persons are probably going to like this album of Victor Herbert hits sung by Dorothy Kirsten. Despite the fresh lyric tones of this excellent singer, the album exudes a definitely commercial tang. There is a chorus which appears sporadically to weave barber-

shop harmonies under Miss Kirsten's shimmering tones. The orchestration is often so elaborately *arranged* that we suspect Victor Herbert might have difficulty in recognizing his original scores. In fact, these pretentious arrangements carry echoes of many of our well-meaning radio programs.

Indian Summer (one of Herbert's most charming melodies) is accorded thoroughly *popular* treatment as it offers Miss Kirsten an opportunity to display her warm, well-placed lower register. *Moonbeams* is also given up-to-date presentation; personally, we would have preferred it if some of the atmosphere of Victor Herbert's own era had been retained. *Kiss Me Again* is attractively sung by the soprano, unhampered by choral shenanigans; likewise, *A Kiss in the Dark* and *'Neath the Southern Moon*.

However, it is in *Romany Life* from *The Fortune Teller* that Miss Kirsten (who has been singing *Mimi*, *Juliette*, *Violetta* and *Micaela* at the Metropolitan recently) gets a chance to show what a fine singer she really is. This *czardas* sparkles with vocal fireworks including a final E flat in *alt* which Miss Kirsten sustains with glamor. Recording is top-notch.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Paris. Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Andre Kostelanetz. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-638. \$3.85.

Duke: April in Paris (from "Walk a Little Faster"). (Sung in English.) One side, and **Poterat: J'attendrai and La Marseillaise.** (Sung in French.) (C-71832D.)

Jacobson: Chanson de Marie Antoinette and Delibes—arr. La Forge: Sylvia-Pizzicato Ballerina. One side, and **Lenoir: Parlez-moi d'Amour.** (Sung in French.) (C-71833D.)

Verdi: La Traviata—Ah! Fors'e lui (Act I). One side, and **Verdi: La Traviata—Sempre libera (Act I).** (Sung in Italian.) (C-71834D.)

Neither the intricate glitter of the Paris boulevards, nor the banks of the Seine yellowing with autumn, nor the chestnut blossoms in the Bois de Boulogne are particularly recalled by Lily Pons' eleventh album, which is nevertheless labeled *Paris*. The title seems a little far-fetched, but then we suppose that record companies lie awake nights thinking up new titles for their albums. However, Mme. Pons sings these songs very sweetly and with her now famous and fastidious artistry.

Some of this is very light stuff. *April in Paris* is an American song with a pleasing melody; *J'attendrai* and *Parlez-moi d'Amour* are night-club songs, the latter made famous by the delightful little *chanteuse*, Lucienne Boyer, the former by the equally engaging Jean Sablon. *J'attendrai* slides into *La Marseillaise* with a roll of drums. One supposes that the line *J'attendrai nuit et jour ton retour* might be applied to occupied France awaiting her liberation, though the piece was originally conceived as a love song. How-

ever, let's let that pass!

The *Chanson de Marie Antoinette* and the vocal version of the *Pizzicato Polka* from Delibes' ballet *Sylvia* are neatly presented. Most important selection in the album is the great aria *Ah, fors'e lui* from Verdi's *La Traviata* sung with recitative and the concluding *Sempre Libera!* Mme. Pons has long wanted to sing the role of *Violetta*. She once told the present writer that New York would then see a really French *Violetta*. She fares best in the *Ah, fors'e lui*, which is delicately sung. The scales and roudades of *Sempre Libera* are tossed off with *chic* and flexibility, but the verve and impact belonging to some of the great *Violettas* of other days are missing as the singer reaches the final high E flat.

Mme. Pons is given meticulously careful accompaniment by her husband, Andre Kostelanetz, and Columbia is to be praised for presenting the singer's voice at such an honest volume level.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Wolf: Songs. (Sung in German.) Grete Stueckgold (soprano) with piano accompaniments by Paul Meyer. 3-12" discs in album. Birch Set No. 2. \$6.50.

100. *An eine Aeolsharfe*. One side, and *Nimmer-satte Liebe* and *Mignon II*.
101. *Begegnung* and *Selig ihr Blinden* and *Ihr jungen Leute*. One side, and *Die Zigeunerin* and *Mein Liebster singt am Haus in Mondenscheine*.
102. *Verschling der Abgrund* and *Agnes*. One side, and *Wiegenlied* and *Du denkst mit einem fadchen* and *Heb' auf dein blondes Haupt*.

Lovers of Hugo Wolf's songs, and this group assumes the proportions of a cult, are well served by Birch records this month. This new and up-and-coming little company presents 13 of Hugo Wolf's songs (some of them recorded "firsts") on six smooth Vinylite surfaces. The artists are Grete Stueckgold, soprano, and Paul Meyer at the piano.

Mme. Stueckgold will be pleasantly remembered for her *Elsa*, *Sieglinde*, and *Aida* some 15 years ago at the Metropolitan. In the interim her occasional song-recitals in New York have won her high praise from that metropolis' most difficult critics.

Wolf's music grows upon you. His intensely personal style and his subtlety in the handling of texts of the finest literary worth are not easy things to grasp at one hearing. But like all things that require some sacrifice and effort, these songs will become more and more a part of the listener as he gives himself generously to Wolf's distinctive moods.

Mme. Stueckgold is a fine singer of *lieder*. Her voice, with the exception of some passages which are not quite in tune, seems to be in excellent condition—warm and velvety—and she sings with a restraint and knowledge that call only for superlatives. Paul Meyer

is also A-1 at the piano.

What a contrast, the spirit in which this album is presented to the public offers, to some of the albums made by distinguished vocalists for our larger recording companies!

The set is accompanied by helpful translations of each song and the recording is so vivid, natural and lifelike that you feel the singer and her accompanist are standing at your elbow.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Milhaud—Cinq Chansons. (Sung in French.) Verna Osborne (soprano) with piano accompaniments by Lukas Foss. 2-10" discs in album. Hargail Set HN-650. \$2.50.

Milhaud wrote these five rather clever little songs presumably for children. However, while the subject matter ("The Four Little Lions," "The Apple and the Snail," etc.) will appeal to the little ones, Charles Vildrac's lyrics are much too sophisticated for a full appreciation by other than adults. We would rather say that these were children's songs for grown-ups.

Verna Osborne has a rather pleasing voice, and while her diction is not always perfect, she points her renditions sufficiently to bring out the meaning of the rather witty lyrics. A leaflet giving the text of each song in French with free English translation is a great help to those whose French is a bit rusty.

The reproduction is satisfactory and the record surfaces reasonably smooth.

"Jerome Kern." Al Goodman and his orchestra, with Earl Wrightson (baritone), Mary Martha Briney (soprano), and the Guild Choristers. 4-10" discs in album. Victor Set P-157. \$3.75.

Here is a nice little album of Kern melodies. Al Goodman's long experience in conducting many leading Broadway musical shows makes him tops in presenting such tunes. With the aid of first-rate vocalists and a good orchestra and chorus, he certainly serves them up in tempting style. Victor added exceptionally fine recording and so we have a little album that should enjoy a large sale.

The selections Mr. Goodman chose for this collection are: *The Song is You*; *Long Ago*; *She Didn't Say "Yes," Why Do I Love You*; *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*; *The Touch of Your Hand*; *The Night Was Made for Love*; and *'Twas Not So Long Ago*.

Latin American Music. Alfredo Antonini and Viva America Orchestra, with vocals by Elsa Miranda. 2-12" discs in album. Alpha Set A-1. \$4.95.

Of the many albums of Latin American music available, we would place the present one amongst the most attractive. A large orchestra is employed under the distinguished direction of Alfredo Antonini and the vocals are supplied by Elsa Miranda, a young lady with a deep contralto voice of pleasing quality.

The recordings are pressed on the quiet nonbreakable Vinylite material.

Just a word or two about Alfredo Antonini, who is responsible for these exceptional recordings, might be in order. He is a graduate of the Royal Conservatory at Milan and was engaged as organist and pianist by Toscanini for the famous La Scala Opera. He came to the United States and with the development of radio became a leading conductor in the broadcasting world. Antonini comes naturally by his interest in Latin American music. His father left Italy to become a member of the famous Buenos Aires opera company at the Teatro Colón and married an Argentine girl.

The present album contains eight popular selections from four of our southern neighbors—Mexico, Cuba, Guatemala and Dominican Republic.

Moore: Oft in the Stilly Night. One side, and **Comin' Thro' the Rye** (trad.). Maggie Teyte (soprano) with piano accompaniments by Gerald Moore. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1804). \$1.85.

Maggie Teyte is becoming more and more popular with American music lovers through her broadcasts and concerts. It would therefore seem that this little disc, that recently arrived from abroad, would be of more than passing interest. The familiar selections are beautifully rendered and the reproduction is of the best.

Kern: Roberta—Selections. Kitty Carlisle, Alfred Drake, Paula Laurence, Kathryn Meisle, orchestra, and chorus, conducted by Harry Sosnik. 6-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-374. \$5.25.

Decca has chosen the ever-popular "Roberta" for another of its fine recordings of musical comedies. A grand cast has been selected including Kitty Carlisle, Alfred Drake, Paula Laurence and Kathryn Meisle. In support of these principals is a fine chorus directed by Jeffry Alexander and an excellent orchestra conducted by Harry Sosnik. All of the well-remembered hits are included, headed by *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes* and *The Touch of Your Hand*.

For those who remember "Roberta," this set of discs will bring back some pleasant memories, and for those to whom it is new, it will introduce some mighty melodious and attractive tunes. It has been extremely well recorded.

Ballads. Sung by Richard Dyer-Bennet accompanying himself on the guitar. 3-12" discs in album. Asch Set 461. \$3.50.

Richard Dyer-Bennet and his guitar seem to be becoming more and more popular with record buyers. Unquestionably he is a leader in his field and adds a note of authenticity to his renditions. The present album contains the following ballads: *Barbara Allen*; *I Once Loved a Girl*; *The Three Ravens*; *John Henry*; and *Gently, Johnny*. The words of each song are printed on the inside cover of the album.

Lehar: Gold and Silver Waltz. One side, and **Felix: Cute Cats**—Under the Linden Tree. (Sung in German.) Erna Sack (soprano) with chorus and orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70050). \$2.50.

Arditi: Parla Valse. One side, and **Flotow: Martha**—Den Teuren zu versoeenen. (Sung in German.) Erna Sack (soprano) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70038). \$2.50.

Previously we have listed recordings by the famous German coloratura soprano Erna Sack and they have met with the hearty approval of a large number of our readers. Therefore, the two discs mentioned above will likely be of prime interest to those music lovers who are making a collection of her recordings. Both of them are re-pressed on nonbreakable Vinylite.

Ballads and Blues. Josh White, with guitar, bass, and drums. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-447. \$3.75.

Josh White has certainly come up some since he led a colored blind singer about South Carolina from village to village with a tin cup in his hand to collect the pennies. At present he is on a concert tour of important cities and is reported to be doing quite well. His success on the air and at Cafe Society in New York are well-known.

The present album contains some of his most popular selections and his many fans will surely find it of prime interest. The numbers are: *I Gave My Love a Cherry*; *The Lass With the Delicate Air*; *Evil Hearted Man*; *Nobody Knows You When You Are Down and Out*; *Frankie and Johnny*; *John Henry*; *Sometime*; and *Strange Fruit*. An attractive booklet, giving a biographical sketch of Josh and illuminating notes on each of the songs, is supplied with this album.

CHORAL



Roberton: All in the April Evening. One side, and **By Cool Siloam's Shady Rill** (Hymntune "Belmont" arr. Roberton). Glasgow Orpheus Choir conducted by Sir Hugh Roberton. 1-12" disc (V-C-3462). \$1.90.

Stanford: The Blue Bird. One side, and **O Can Ye Sew Cushions?** (arr. Bantock). Glasgow Orpheus Choir conducted by Sir Hugh Roberton. 1-10" disc (V-B-9464). \$1.35.

Several months ago a few samples of these discs were received from England and they created a real sensation among those few music lovers who heard them. Nothing but praise was heard for the choir, which is now in its fortieth year, and for its venerable conductor, Sir Hugh Roberton, who passed his three-score-and-ten a couple of years ago. Several collectors of choral recordings thought that they had never heard anything quite so fine as the rendition of *All in the April Evening*. Any library of choral records will be enriched by the addition of either or both of these discs.

Faith of Our Fathers. Sonora Chapel Choir conducted by Eugene Mott. 4-10" discs in album. Sonora Set MS-484. \$2.75.

By singing just a verse or two of each hymn, it has been possible to include sixteen favorite ones in this collection. Eugene Mott's well-trained choir gives entirely satisfactory renditions with appropriate organ accompaniments. The reproduction has been faithfully accomplished.

Among the sixteen hymns in this group are: *Rock of Ages*; *Come Thou Almighty King*; *Faith of Our Fathers*; *Abide With Me*; *Lead Kindly Light*; *Onward, Christian Soldiers*; and *Nearer My God to Thee*.

OPERA



Puccini: Tosca—E lucevan le stelle (Act III). One side, and **Puccini: Tosca**—Recondita armonia (Act I). Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25040). \$3.09.

Mascagni: L'Amico Fritz—O Amore, o bella luce (Act III). One side, and **Verdi: I Lombardi**—La mia letizia infondere. Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25026). \$3.09.

Puccini: La Bohème—Che gelida manina (Act I). One side, and **Cilea: L'Arlesiana**—E la solita storia (Lamento di Federico). Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25021). \$3.09.

Verdi: Falstaff—Dal labbro il canto estasiato (Act III). One side, and **Bellini: La Sonnambula**—Prendi: l'anel ti dono (Act I). Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25022). \$3.09.

All the above sung in Italian.

Four-pocket Tagliavini souvenir album to hold above records available. \$1.

Not all the news from Italy during the war was about the ghost-haunted beachhead at Salerno or the bloody hazard of Monte Cassino. From time to time letters and reports would get through from the G.I.'s, recounting that they had heard, among others in Italy, a wonderful new singer, a tenor who really had a beautiful voice and whose artistry was a memory they liked to cherish during those dark, uncertain days. Since the end of the war we have all been hearing increasingly about this singer—Ferruccio Tagliavini.

And so, we felt unbelievably intrigued when Signor Tagliavini's first batch of records lay before us, all the more so when we learned that he has been engaged for the Metropolitan's coming season. Let it be said immediately that with the first playing of these records, the singer emerged as an Italian tenor

(and an Italian tenor, for some reason, sounds utterly unlike any other kind of tenor and seems to command an enthusiasm which is altogether different), of the class of such already semi-legendary stars as Beniamino Gigli, Giacomo Lauri-Volpi and Tito Schipa. As a matter of fact one was instantly struck by the similarity of the Gigli and Tagliavini voices, though the younger singer hasn't quite all the velvety roundness and generosity of vocal expenditure of his celebrated predecessor. Nevertheless, Signor Tagliavini is very, very good, a complete master of his instrument, a vocal technician to be reckoned with, an oasis in this desert of tenor shortage.

In this set of eight arias, three are as familiar as one's own name, and five are decidedly off the beaten track and well worth up-to-date recordings. The three familiar arias are the *Recondita armonia* and *E lucevan le stelle* from *Tosca* and the *Racconto di Rodolfo* from *Bohème*. *Recondita armonia* is perhaps the least successful of the eight records, for, along with Gigli's many virtues, Tagliavini has also absorbed some of that singer's less fortunate mannerisms, one being an occasional sobby quality when the text does not warrant it. There is no reason for a lachrymose tone in *Cavaradossi's* opening aria, and in this case it is sung far too slowly and with not enough go-ahead. One gets the idea of beautifully fashioned isolated phrases rather than a feeling of the aria as a whole. The *E lucevan le stelle*, however, is quite another matter. Here Tagliavini is at his best. The light opening *parlando*, the admirable breath-control upon which ride the lingering, high pianissimo phrases are indeed poetry. The *Bohème Narrative* is also a superb and intelligent piece of singing, the tenor indicating that he can expand his relatively light voice when he so desires, as in the phrase *L'anima ho millionaria*. Incidentally, the aria is not pitched down as it is for 80 per cent of the tenor brotherhood, but is sung in the original key with its soaring high C.

The inclusion of the lovely aria from Verdi's *Falstaff* is a matter for rejoicing, for this is indeed an exquisite number and there is no modern recording of this passage except for the one in the complete set. The arias from *Lombardi* and *Sonnambula* were also in need of recording and show Signor Tagliavini thoroughly at home in an earlier style—a *bel canto* singer. The aria from *L'Amico Fritz* would justify the belief that Mascagni had more to say than just *Cavalleria*. It is a charming melody and most sensitively sung. The lament from Cilea's *L'Arlesiana* gives the singer opportunity to indulge in some high voltage emotion as well as in some slightly off-key singing (the only instance in the set).

In these days of coarse and indifferent singing it is indeed a pleasure to come upon something we had almost forgotten; a tenor with easily attained high notes, who can also spin a tone and conduct a vocal line in an artistic conception.

The recording is admirable. Even the harp and

drum seem to have been caught with an unfamiliar faithfulness in the fine accompaniments of Ugo Tansini and the E.I.A.R. Symphony Orchestra. Surfaces vary. They are as good as domestic ones.

It is a pleasure to welcome Signor Tagliavini to our shores even by way of wax surfaces.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Bizet: The Pearl Fishers—In Memory I Lie Beneath the Palms, and Dream of Love (Act I). One side, and **Donizetti: La Favorita**—Spirit So Fair (Act IV). (Sung in English.) Heddle Nash (tenor) with the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (V-C-3409). \$1.90.

Verdi: La Traviata—Ah, Say to Thy Daughter Dear and Now Command Me (Act II). (Sung in English.) J. Hammond (soprano) and D. Noble (baritone) with the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Basil Cameron. 1-12" disc (V-C-3387). \$1.90.

Verdi: Don Carlos—O Fatal Beauty (Act III). One side, and **Saint-Saens: Samson and Delilah**—Fair Spring Is Returning (Act I). (Sung in English.) Gladys Ripley (contralto) with the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (V-C-3404). \$1.90.

Rooters for grand opera in English can luxuriate in this batch of records which comes to us from the British Isles. Here we have some of Britain's current singers warbling selections from Italian and French opera in the vernacular. Sometimes, we must confess, these texts (so very clearly enunciated) sound just a bit silly. For example: Ah, say to thy daughter dear and Forgetting my sorrow and my bitter pain, I'll wait for the morrow. But, to be perfectly fair, this writer must admit he is anything but an "Opera in English" fan.

Dennis Noble is the only singer of this group apt to be known to Americans. His fine *Figaro* here in Philadelphia several years ago is still gratefully remembered. Mr. Noble appears with Miss Joan Hammond in the *Violetta-Germont* duet from Verdi's *Traviata*, which is given an intelligent, clearly articulated performance. Miss Hammond, an Australian lyric soprano (who is the *Dido* of the Purcell set), has a sweet voice which she uses adroitly.

Miss Gladys Ripley, a contralto, is heard in *Delilah's* Spring Song from *Samson and Delilah* and *Princess Eboli's* aria, *O Fatal Beauty!* from Verdi's *Don Carlos*. The lyric sweetness of the former suits her far better than the sweep and grandeur of the latter which requires a Matzenauer or an Onegin for its full realization.

Best record in this batch is Heddle Nash's aria from Bizet's *Pearl Fishers*—*In memory I lie beneath the palms and dream of love*. This is sung with just the right dreamy and nostalgic touch, the voice carrying a slightly veiled quality which is immensely effective. Mr. Nash's breath control and long sustained

phrasing is a matter for rejoicing, making this record one of the loveliest examples of lyric tenor art on discs. On the reverse is the aria, *Spirit So Fair* from Donizetti's *La Favorita* which is also capably sung high C and all.

With the exception of the unusually beautiful *Pearl Fishers* record, it cannot be said that the artists heard on these surfaces are upholders of the grand manner or possessors of tones apt to linger in one's memory. Nevertheless, they are obviously excellently trained, intelligent singers.

Dr. Malcolm Sargent and the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra give fine accompaniments and the recording and surfaces are as good as you are ever likely to come upon. Would that ours, in this country, were as uniformly good!

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Verdi: Aida—O cieli azzurri. One side, and **Puccini: Tosca**—Vissi d'arte. Emmy Destinn (soprano). 1-10" disc (CRS-16). \$2.

Verdi: Ernani—Infelice. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Don Juan**—Serenade. Edouard de Reszke (bass). 1-10" disc (CRS-3). \$2.

Puccini: Tosca—E lucevan le stelle. One side, and **Verdi: Aida**—Celeste Aida. John McCormack (tenor). 1-10" disc (CRS-12). \$2.

Mozart: Don Giovanni—Nella Bionda. One side, and **Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro**—Non piu andrai. Adamo Didur (Bass). 1-10" disc (CRS-8). \$2.00.

(All the above sung in Italian.)

Wagner: Tannhauser—O du mein holder Abendstern. One side, and **Wagner: Der Fliegende Hollander**—Wie oft in Meeres tiefsten Schlund. (Sung in German.) Anton van Rooy (baritone). 1-10" disc (CRS-9). \$2.

The five records listed above will be of especial interest to those persons who are making collections of recordings of great artists of another day. We presume that these pressings were dubbed from copies of the original records as it is not likely that the masters are presently available. The artists represented with their dates are: Edouard de Reszke (1855-1917); Anton van Rooy (1870-1932); Adamo Didur (1874-1946); Emmy Destinn (1878-1930); and John McCormack (1884-1945).

Of particular interest is the de Reszke disc because so few original copies of his recordings are in existence. From a technical standpoint the Destinn and Didur discs are superior to the others. We were particularly attracted to the Destinn recordings, which this superb artist made when she was in her prime at about the age of thirty. Certainly there is no voice today which equals it in quality and clarity.

If our younger readers would like to hear some of the singers that their parents and grandparents continually rave about, these discs afford that opportunity.

CHILDREN



Tales of the Olympian Gods. Ronald Colman (speaking) with music and sound effects directed by Victor Young. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-475. \$3.50.

This month we have another in Decca's ever-growing list of excellent recordings for children. Ronald Colman, with the aid of appropriate music and sound effects, tells, in his usual charming manner, "Tales of the Olympian Gods." Louis Untermeyer supplies a beautifully written booklet with illustrations that serve as an illuminating introduction to the mythical stories. In this practical and materialistic age it is a great relief to have these tales of the spirit world so pleasantly portrayed. We hope that many of our young people will have the opportunity of hearing these unusual records.

Mr. Colman adds the following remarks to Mr. Untermeyer's introduction:

"These stories came out of the mists before history and before the Christian era—stories of love, revelry and vengeance of the all-powerful gods of Olympus, and the fates of the mortals who excited their interest or displeasure. They have endured through the centuries, and today we find them echoing still; not only inspiring the artist in man, but reflecting themselves in our language, in science, in our gardens—indeed, recurring in our daily round to an extent of which we are only dimly aware.

"To know the stories of Apollo and Diana, of Cupid and Psyche, of Jupiter and the rest of his Olympian family, is to understand more fully much of the best in literature and the fine arts, and to discover freshly illuminated avenues of adventure, beauty and romance."

The Whale Who Wanted to Sing at the Met. Nelson Eddy (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-640. \$3.

This little album brings back memories. Long before Nelson Eddy became the famous star that he now is, he experimented with a home recording machine, making male quartet recordings in which he sang all of the parts. This was done by first recording the melody in the baritone key and then putting the recording blank back on the recorder and adding the first tenor part, and then the second tenor, and finally the bass. This is just what he does in this album. His rendition of the Lucia Sextette is really something. As we recall it, Nelson made a quartet recording of *Silent Night* and had a number of pressings made and sent them to his friends as a Christmas greeting. We had one but it mysteriously disappeared several years ago. We would certainly like to have another for our record collection.

All of the above doesn't have too much to do

with the present album, except to point out that sometimes we do things purely for the fun of it and later it makes it possible for us to use that experience in doing something of great commercial value. Mr. Eddy can sing in different voices and so he was chosen to take the part of Willie-the-Whale in Walt Disney's picture "Make Mine Music." From the "The Whale Who Wanted to Sing at the Met" sequence this amusing recording was made. Mr. Eddy takes all of the speaking parts in the sequence and does all of the singing. It is very clever and is bound to entertain the grown-ups as well as the children. There isn't another children's album anything like it, and we predict that it will enjoy an immense sale. It is novel, it is unique, and it is thoroughly amusing. A description of the action and the text is printed on the inside covers of the album. R.

The Pied Piper of Hamelin. Ingrid Bergman (speaking) with music and sound effects directed by Victor Young. 2-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-450. \$2.50.

Another in Decca's impressive list of albums for children! Practically all of the former releases in this series have been superior and have received the unstinted praise of the critics. The present album, Browning's *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* recited by Ingrid Bergman with original music composed by Victor Young, is not quite up to the standard of the former sets. One has to strain one's ear to catch all that Miss Bergman says and then it is not always understandable. This recording may be all right for older children who are thoroughly familiar with the poem but we are afraid that the little tots will tire long before it is finished.

A booklet containing the text, which, by the way, Miss Bergman does not follow too closely, is included in the album.

Tchaikovsky—His Story and His Music. Floyd Mack (speaking) with Vox Symphony Orchestra conducted by Max Goberman. 3-10" discs in album. Vox Set No. 257. \$3.75.

This album is the third in a series, whose purpose it is to acquaint young people with great composers and their music. The first two were devoted to the music of Mozart and Schubert.

The idea is a very clever one. The first two volumes had Jose Ferrer for the narrator; the present album employs the services of Floyd Mack in that role. The story of Tchaikovsky's life is told in a series of interesting episodes, and in each episode there is introduced an appropriate bit of the composer's music. A complete list of the selections played is listed on the cover of the album so that if the children like any particular piece, a full recording of it may be obtained for their further enjoyment and study. We surely feel that after a child has listened to these discs, he will certainly always remember something of Tchaikovsky and his music.

DICTION



Bill Hay Reads the Bible. Bill Hay (speaking). 5-12" discs in album. Transcriptions Set No. 101. \$10.

Bill Hay, whose radio program "Bill Hay Reads the Bible" is known to thousands, has recorded a few of his favorite selections from that greatest book of all time. Unquestionably Mr. Hay was guided in his choice by the thousands upon thousands of requests he has received from his radio listeners through the years he has been on the air. As we consider Mr. Hay's selections, we find each passage has a significant bearing on a better way of everyday living. The booklet accompanying this album contains a commentary by Humphrey Bourne. In his commentary, Mr. Bourne considers each selection and stresses the help one may find in that particular passage of Holy Scripture. It is not too much to expect that after one becomes familiar with these recordings that he may from time to time seek solace and strength from the recorded passages that seem to apply to the situation in which he finds himself. In other words, it is thought that these recordings may be helpful in developing a better way of everyday living.

The selections have been chosen from both the Old and New Testaments.

The Creation and the Garden of Eden. Narrated by Bill Hay, with assisting artists and the Homer Hall Chorus. 4-12" discs in album. Transcriptions Set No. 100. \$8.

Abraham and Isaac and Song of Solomon. Narrated by Bill Hay, with assisting artists and the Robert Mitchell Boychoir. 5-12" discs in album. Transcriptions Set No. 102. \$10.

At last there are available Biblical recordings worthy of the inspired text. It is a great joy to eventually find dramatizations of stories from the Bible that have been carefully adapted by skillful and intelligent writers, and to find them beautifully recorded by casts of first-rate players directed by an able and meticulous director. In the two volumes listed above this has been accomplished, and always in perfect taste. No one should hesitate to make a gift of either of these albums to the most particular Bible student or to his Sunday School; either will receive them with sincere thanks, we are very sure.

Much care and considerable time were given to the preparation of these dramatizations. No expense was spared to make them worthy. We do not know whether they were subsidized or not, but if they were not, more copies will have to be sold than we think possible to make them a commercial success. We suppose that the important thing is that they are an artistic success, and if they are not sufficiently popular to warrant further additions to the series, we just won't get any more.

Bill Hay, whose radio program "Bill Hay Reads the Bible" is known to thousands of listeners, is the narrator in all of the dramatizations. The excellent cast of players is headed by Guy Bates Post and includes among many others Philip Sudano, Julia Lorenz, Dan Stowell, Tommy Cook and June Foray. The producer and director is Robert E. Grey, whose acting and directing in numerous pictures have brought him unstinted praise. The musical selections furnished by the Homer Hall Chorus and the Robert Mitchell Boychoir add greatly to the attractiveness of these outstanding recordings.

Many persons believe that we are at the beginning of a great religious revival, and if this is so, these albums have been made available at a most propitious time. Surely they will help one to a fuller and richer understanding of these stories from Holy Scripture and bring to all who may listen some of the fundamental truths that it would seem so many of us have forgotten. Transcriptions, Inc., should be complimented for doing such a superlative job in the field of religious publications. R.

Historic Record of World War No. 2. Speeches by the late Pres. Roosevelt, Gen. MacArthur, Gen. Eisenhower, Adm. Nimitz. 1-12" disc (Audio-Scriptions). \$2.65.

This is a rather unusual record of historic interest. It contains an excerpt of President's Roosevelt's speech to Congress asking for a declaration of war against Japan; the last message received from beleaguered Corregidor; General MacArthur's speech upon his return to the Philippines; General Eisenhower's speech on VE Day; and Admiral Nimitz's speech on VJ Day. For those who are making a collection of historic recordings this disc will be of prime interest.

MISCELLANEOUS



Continental Gaieties. Mischa Borr and his orchestra, with Mirko (guitar), and vocals by Sidor Belarsky, Greta Keller, and Blanka. 5-10" discs in album. Victor Set S-45. \$4.50.

Henri René has gathered together a group of European night-club stars for this unusual album and has chosen selections that one might likely hear in the better continental cafés. Among these artists are, Mischa Borr (violinist), for many years maestro of the Waldorf-Astoria Orchestra; Sidor Belarsky (bass-baritone), late of the Leningrad State Opera; Blanka (soprano), who has appeared in light opera in many important European cities; Greta Keller, famed international chanteuse, who made an outstanding success at her own supper club in the Hotel Algonquin; and Mirko, Yugoslav guitar virtuoso, who made his American debut at the World's Fair in 1939, and since has appeared in many swank New York night-clubs.

If you would like to imagine yourself in one of

the gay European night-spots, put these records on your automatic phonograph and sit back and relax.

Carlos Montoya—Guitar Solos of Argentinita's Famous Dances. Carlos Montoya (guitar). 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 615. \$3.

Carlos Montoya was born in Madrid and comes from a family of famous gypsy artists. His mother started to teach him the guitar when he was seven and from then on his life has been devoted to his instrument. He played in the leading cafés of his native city and later toured extensively with Argentinita and with Vicente Escudero.

In 1936 he joined forces with Argentinita and remained with her until her death. They appeared together on several South American tours and throughout the United States.

For the present album, Mr. Montoya has chosen a number of Spanish dances from the repertoire of his late partner, the famous Argentinita. He plays them with rare skill and they have been nicely recorded.

Trombone Solos. Jacob Raichman (trombone) with piano accompaniments by V. Heifetz. 4-10" discs in album. Kismet Set J-40. \$4.50.

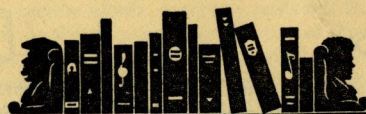
Mr. Raichman is the first trombonist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and is also a noted teacher of that instrument. Because of the excellence of Mr. Raichman's playing, and the fact that recordings of trombone solos are practically nonexistent, this album is of more than usual interest. We are very glad to report that the recording has been faithfully accomplished and that the surfaces of the discs are pleasingly smooth.

The following selections will be found in this album: *Eili-Eili*; *Cinquantaine*; Schubert's *Ave Maria*; Antoniotto's *Adagio and Vivace*; *A Doubt* by Glinka; Massenet's *Elegy*; *Corinthian Polka*; and *Inflammatus* from Rossini's *Stabat Mater*.

Chimes (with organ and vibraharp). Lorin Whitney (organist). 4-10" disc in album. Sacred Records Set S-3. \$3.75.

There is always a demand for new recordings of chimes and so the present album should find a ready market. Lorin Whitney is known for his broadcasting on a coast-to-coast hook-up, and those who listen to his programs will be especially interested in this album. He has selected a number of hymns for this set of discs, among which might be mentioned *The Church's One Foundation*; *Just As I Am*; *Sweet Hour of Prayer*; *An Evening Prayer*; and *Now the Day is Over*.

The reproduction has been satisfactorily accomplished.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

Letters of Composers. An Anthology 1603-1945. Compiled and edited by Gertrude Norman and Miriam Lubell Shrifte. xviii + 422 + xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

The Borzoi Book of Ballets. By Grace Robert. xvii + 362 + xxiii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.50.

Listening to the Orchestra. By Kitty Barne. 299 pp. Illustrated. The Bobbs-Merrill Company (Indianapolis). Price \$2.75.

Listening to Music Creatively. By Edwin J. Stringham. xx + 479 pp. Illustrated. Prentice-Hall, Inc. (New York.) Price \$5.

Talking Wax. By Leroy Hughbanks. 142 pp. The Hobson Book Press (New York). Price \$2.50.

Sergei Prokofiev: His Musical Life. By Israel V. Nestyev. Translated from the Russian by Rose Prokofieva. Introduction by Sergei Eisenstein. xxvii + 193 + xiv pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

Impresario. A memoir by S. Hurok in collaboration with Ruth Goode. 291 pp. Illustrated. Random House (New York). Price \$3.

Theme and Variations. An autobiography by Bruno Walter. Translated from the German by James A. Galston. Illustrated. xi + 344 + xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—A&H, B—Brunswick, BL—Biblestone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargall, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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50c. per year

A Treasury of Grand Opera. Edited by Henry W. Simon. v+403 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

If you play the piano, or even play at it a bit, you are destined to spend a few hours that way when you open this book. In the first place, it lays flat on the music rack; then it is printed for easy reading. And the arrangement of the music for piano is without exception the nicest and sanest we have ever seen. Now, if you don't play the piano but like opera and would like to know what these various characters are singing, the English translations are here for all the principal numbers (with the original language in italics beneath the English).

This book is really a treasury of the seven operas it holds. The chosen seven for this collection are: *Don Giovanni* (Mozart), *Lohengrin* (Wagner), *La Traviata* (Verdi), *Faust* (Gounod), *Aida* (Verdi), *Carmen* (Bizet), and *Pagliacci* (Leoncavallo). There are illustrations for every scene of every opera. The history, story and dramatic action, and musical analysis for the opera are given first; then follows music of the principal numbers in their vocal and piano arrangements. Many arias are transposed to a singable key for the layman (with the original key indicated). It is strictly a book for the layman, as any serious student would have to use a standard score for his purpose. But for the layman, for whom this book is designed, it is of the highest value.

Of the five collaborators who made this book possible, to William Steinberg and Albert Sirmay goes the credit for the remarkable piano arrangements, so faithful to the score, yet with the melody always there. George Mead provided beautiful translations and Rafaelo Busoni the illustrations born of his wide experience as a stage designer. Henry Simon coordinated their efforts and provided for you a book of many

uses, not the least of which is this: you may hear a radio broadcast of one of these operas with this book in your hand and knowingly follow the action and music. We can find nothing but praise for this book; not because it is so original, but because it is so well done. S.

* * *

Modern Music. By Max Graf. Translated by Beatrice R. Maier. 320 pp. Philosophical Library (New York). Price \$3.

In this unusual and highly interesting book, Max Graf, one of Europe's outstanding music critics, tells the story of the music and the musicians that have been a part of his life, since as a boy he attended the funeral services for Anton Bruckner at the Karlskirche in Vienna on a day in October, 1896. The title of this book, *Modern Music*, is a poor and misleading one. The first impression one would get from the title is that it is a treatise on the wild music that some of our present-day experimenters in the field of musical composition are offering to the public. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Briefly, Mr. Graf's book is a series of essays beginning with "The Twilight of the Classical Gods" and ending with "Music in the United States After the Second World War." Such great figures in the world of music as Gustav Mahler, Claude Debussy, Richard Strauss, Paul Hindemith, Arnold Schoenberg, Igor Stravinsky, Puccini *et al.* take their proper places in these intriguing essays. The marked influence, that the economic and social changes that have taken place in the world since the turn of the century, upon the development of the music of that period, is stressed and evaluated.

Mr. Graf has a fascinating style and nearly every paragraph contains some interesting information; much of it was new to this reviewer. *Modern Music* is the sort of book that one can

pick up in a spare moment and always find something worth while reading. However, if one does this, he should keep track of the time for he is likely to become so engrossed that he may very easily miss his next appointment.

* * *

Shining Trumpets. By Rudi Blesh. xvi+365+xvii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

Here is another book about jazz, but not "just another" book about jazz. It fills a very definite need—that of attempting to explain jazz to a lover of classical music. Readers of Panassié's *Le Jazz Hot* will recall that Panassié attempted to parallel jazz and classical music; but he left us with the impression that they were two worlds—that one who prefers classical music should not condemn one interested in jazz and vice versa.

Mr. Blesh maintains that jazz is music to be enjoyed, the same as classical music is. He infers that one who understands only one of the two fields is missing something most satisfying; in other words, one should have catholic taste when it comes to music.

The author "does not miss any important musical or sociological implications," says the inside flap of the cover; and this is certainly true. For Mr. Blesh not only tells the story of jazz from its very first beginnings and explains how the American Negro came to be the first to "invent" jazz, but he also documents his story with biographical material about jazz musicians and with records that the musician has made. The story moves right along in a somewhat romantic fashion, although the romance is not carried to the extreme that it is in Ramsey and Smith's *Jazzmen*.

Rudi Blesh is the pseudonym of Rudolph Pickett Blesh. He was born in Guthrie, Oklahoma Territory, in 1899 and later attended Dartmouth College and the University of California; he has been interested in music, and especially in jazz, since an early age, and he is well known to jazz fiends because of his writings in many publications and periodicals, among which are the *New York Herald Tribune*, *Arts and Architecture*, and the *Jazz Record*.

The present volume is a scholarly work and

is recommended not so much to the lover of jazz (who may find much of the material "old hat") as to the open-minded classicist who would like to expand his knowledge of music.

* * *

Columbia's new complete catalog for 1947 is now ready at your dealers. It contains 561 pages, the largest one yet. The price is 25c.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE. All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive* of excise tax. In ordering please add 5 per cent to list prices quoted.

ORCHESTRA



Glazounov: The Seasons—Ballet Suite. Dallas Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1072. \$4.85.

Not yet a year old, the Dallas Symphony here makes its record debut. The orchestra, technically, is surprisingly proficient; and for an eighty-five piece ensemble, has nearly the opulence of our larger and older groups. It may be that the reproduction flatters it, for it is indeed well recorded; and the hall used has excellent recording acoustics (side five, for example). The strings are quite fiery and brilliant, and the woodwinds articulate some nice passages. We would have preferred a bit more bass tone in some of the louder portions. The surfaces are generally fair, several were nearly noiseless.

The music of *The Seasons* is characteristic ballet music, and the score is completely obvious on first hearing—certainly to anyone on the second hearing. It has plenty of motion, color, and sparkle, and Dorati keeps it moving with broad, bold strokes and does not trifle over any slushy details. The music is bright and the performance crisp. *The Seasons* is a colorful ballet in one act of four scenes: A Winter Landscape, A Landscape Covered with Flowers, A Vast Field of Wheat Nodding in the Breeze, and An Autumnal Landscape, as Victor's notes have it; but generally the scenes are known as—you guessed it—Winter, Spring, Summer, Autumn. The Autumn Bacchanale is familiar music to most persons, and all of the score

is charming fare, free from the purple patches usually associated with Slavic music of this era.

Two previous recordings, one conducted by Glazounov himself, and one by Armas Järnefelt, are entirely out of the running, besides being not available. The present album sets forth the music in fine fashion, and is certainly welcome to the recorded repertoire. On the basis of this set, we will be pleased to hear from Dorati and his Dallas Symphony again in the near future. S.

Milhaud: Suite Française. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Darius Milhaud. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-268. \$2.85.

Every bar of music in this little set is captivating. The folk music Milhaud has used and the folk-like melodies he has composed for this suite are consistently interesting and bright. Each of its five sections are short, and devoid of barren stretches, fill-ins, bridges, labored developments, and anything which might cause one to lose interest for a moment. The five parts are named after French Provinces: Normandy, Brittany, Ile-de-France (of which Paris is the center), Alsace-Lorraine, and Provence. After hearing the suite one feels he has had a glance at five miniature landscapes.

Originally written for band, this suite was premiered by the Goldman Band in June, 1945; several weeks later the first orchestral performance took place at Lewisohn Stadium. Milhaud states that he had in mind a composition fit for high school purposes, for the youth of our nation—music of their time, not too difficult to perform, but keeping the characteristic idiom of the composer. We believe he had a splendid idea and accomplished a good work for them as well as for us. This score is surely far from much of the stuff the average high school band pumps out, and we imagine it will do them good to work on this score. It may not be a *Sacre du Printemps* for difficulty; but it's certainly no *Hearts and Flowers* for simplicity.

Any previous notions of our readers concerning Milhaud's music should be discarded. The man is very prolific and uncommonly versatile. Some of his music is hard to digest; but this lovely suite will be enjoyed by anyone who hears it. We spent entirely too much time replaying it for the sheer delight of its catchy rhythms and folkish character. Milhaud is evidently a competent conductor, for the performance is capital, and the reproduction is good. Surfaces on our set were very quiet. Here is one of the year's best buys in two-record sets. S.

Mozart: Serenade "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" (K.525). London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 2-12" discs (V-DB-6204 and V-DB-6205). \$5.

In the past decade or two there has been an abundance of recordings of the popular and lovable *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*. We have yet to hear the set by

Karl Bohm and the Saxon State Orchestra; but for many years our favorite recording has been the old Polydor set by Furtwängler and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, although Bruno Walter gave us two interesting examples and Weingartner one also. For grace, style, elegance, and all-around Mozartian flavor, the Furtwängler job was always intriguing.

The present Beecham set is recorded much more robustly than the older Polydor set, and while it may not be entirely in keeping with the character of the music, Beecham's strings are reproduced vividly. As we consider Furtwängler and Beecham two of the world's outstanding living conductors, we will offer a brief blow-by-blow description of their interpretations.

In the first movement, neither conductor observes the repeats, both have the same tempo, and Furtwängler is a shade more delicate in the softer passages with lighter phrasing. The second movement finds Furtwängler observing more repeats than Beecham and approaching the *Romanze* with a little lighter touch. On the return to the principal theme (bar 52), Beecham uses a solo first and a solo second violin to the end except for the final eight bars. Furtwängler continues in this portion with the regular string section. Beecham makes another slight change in the third movement at the close, observing an unmarked *ritard* and closing with a final chord; both observe all repeats in the traditional manner.

It is in the final movement that Beecham makes a radical change that causes everyone to sit up and take notice. He halves the tempo. Furtwängler takes this movement at the customary pace, with *half* notes at about 132—Beecham takes the *quarters* at 132. The effect is indeed startling, especially in this day and age of accelerated tempi. We admit it is a clever idea, for the inner voices stand out boldly, and the movement, being short anyhow, does not drag in the least. We can only uphold Furtwängler and the traditional pace by saying that our copy of the score (Baron) has the time indicated as simple binary time, commonly called split time, indicating *two* beats to the measure, and that is the way his conducting can be felt. In Beecham's version, *four* beats to the measure are distinctly felt.

When all is said and done, Beecham's new recording should be heard, for it is a stimulating experience. Many persons will add this to their collections which already contain one of the Walter or Weingartner sets. S.

Tchaikovsky: Serenade in C major, Op. 48—2. Walzer and 4. Finale (Tema Russo). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Weisbach. 1-12" disc (V-DB-4586). \$2.50.

This tuneful Tchaikovsky music has never been more pleasingly recorded than we find it on the present HMV disc. The silken strings of the Berlin Philharmonic show off to fine advantage, and Herr Weisbach conducts a performance that is bound to please even the most critical music lovers.

Handel—arr. Harty: "Water Music" Suite. The Hallé Orchestra conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent. 2-12" discs (V-C-3306 and V-C-3307). \$3.80.

There are those who may prefer this more recent recording of Handel's popular *Water Music*, but for ourselves, we will still be satisfied with our recording by the London Philharmonic under the distinguished direction of Sir Hamilton Harty (Columbia Set X-13). That recording is a favorite of ours and we often dust it off and play it.

For those who may have forgotten, it may be of interest to recall that Handel wrote this music as a gesture of reconciliation. It appears that Handel, upon his second visit to England, attached himself to the court of Queen Anne and quite forgot to return to his former patron the Elector of Hanover. Upon the Queen's death in 1714, his former master came to the English throne as George I, and Handel realized that he was quite out of favor. He heard that the King was going to take a trip up the Thames on his royal barge and so he wrote this suite and employed a boat full of musicians to play it while the King was passing. It is said that His Majesty was so pleased with the lovely music that came to him over the smoothly flowing water that he immediately sent for the composer, and a reconciliation was effected. Handel was given a pension double in value of that which he had received under Queen Anne.

Sousa: Stars and Stripes Forever. One side, and **Sousa: Semper Fidelis.** Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 1-12" disc (V-18-0053). \$2.

This record was released by RCA Victor to mark a great milestone in that company's march in its long history of record making, beginning at the turn of the century. It celebrates the pressing of the one billionth Victor record. However, if interest in recordings keeps going as it is at present, it won't take another 45 years to produce another billion.

The present disc contains two of Sousa's most popular marches and they are given thrilling performances by Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony. The recordings are stamped on the new nonbreakable Vinylite material.

Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana—Intermezzo. One side, and **Leoncavallo: Pagliacci**—Intermezzo. Dresden State Opera Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 1-12" disc (V-DB-4556). \$2.50.

The attractive feature of this disc is the splendid recording of the intermezzo from *Pagliacci* which is not available on any domestic disc. Of course, as there are numerous good recordings of the *Cavalleria Rusticana* intermezzo in the domestic catalogs, it is too bad that something else could not have been coupled with the *Pagliacci* selection, but that is the way this disc arrived from abroad and there isn't anything that anyone can do about it.

Londonderry Air (trad.). One side, and **Dvorák: Largo** (from "The New World Symphony"). Sigmund Romberg and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-11-9223). \$1.

Two familiar tunes nicely played by a large symphonic orchestra under the direction of the well-known composer and conductor, Sigmund Romberg. Superbly recorded.

CONCERTO



Mozart: Concerto for Flute and Harp in C major (K.229). Marcel Moyse (flute) and Lily Laskine (harp) with orchestra conducted by Piero Coppola. 3-12" discs (V-C-2387 to V-C-2389) in album. (Also available in automatic sequence V-C-7219 to V-C-7221). \$5.70.

This recording was made a number of years ago, for it was re-pressed and released in America in 1932. It remained in the RCA Victor catalog for a number of years but was discontinued along with many other important items when the war required the catalog to be greatly reduced in size. There has been a substantial call for it and so those who are interested will doubtless be glad to know that a recent shipment from abroad contained some copies of it.

This Concerto was composed in Paris in 1778 for the use of the Duke de Guines and his daughter. The Duke was an admirable flautist, as Mozart himself testified, and his daughter was an equally accomplished harpist. Mozart, brought to the attention of the Duke by Grimm, was commissioned to write a flute and harp concerto; and though, according to Jahn, these instruments were by no means Mozart's favorites, "the fact did not prevent his accomplishing his task to the satisfaction of the Duke."

Although this work seems to be a very pleasing one to us, it is seldom heard. The last time we recall hearing it was at a concert given by the Philadelphia Orchestra a dozen or so years ago with Edna Phillips (harpist) and W. M. Kincaid (flautist). It was greeted with considerable enthusiasm at that concert.

The present recording will be found to be highly satisfactory, we are sure. Both of the soloists give fine performances and have excellent orchestral support under the capable direction of Piero Coppola. R.

Mozart: Concerto No. 3 in E flat major, K.447 (for Horn and Orchestra). Aubrey Brain (horn) and the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 2-12" discs (V-DB-3973 and V-DB-3974). \$5.

Several years ago, RCA Victor thought well enough of this recording to re-press it and list it in the Victor catalog. However, although there has been quite a demand for it, it has been generally unavailable. A few copies arrived in a recent shipment from England and so we are listing it this month with the following

notes, which appeared when the domestic re-pressing was released.

Mozart wrote an uncommonly large number of works for, or prominently featuring, the French Horn. He even wrote four concerti for this instrument, although they all are undoubtedly written to poke fun at his faithful Leitgeb, a competent but pathetic horn player in the Archbishop's orchestra, who acted in the capacity of Mozart's companion, servant and clerk.

The French Horn is a notoriously difficult instrument to play. Its exceptional length and conical bore, which tapers gradually for more than twelve feet from the narrow mouthpiece to the wide sounding-bell, contribute to the difficulty of controlling the large number of partials produced by the instrument. Even today, with horns equipped with rotary valves for instantaneous changes of key, the tempo which Mozart indicated for this work is almost too fast for a successful execution of the horn passages. We wonder what it sounded like, played by poor Leitgeb on a "hand" horn, unequipped with valves and scientifically constructed tuning slides. The work is an odd combination of romantic beauty and pure jest, although the total effect is somehow not anachronous. The trills and ridiculous cadenzas, mocking the rich dignity and languor of the horns, are well spaced, and the lovely orchestral interludes have a gaiety and freshness that speak well for Mozart's impeccable taste.

Only in one or two places does Aubrey Brain falter in his herculean effort to have the last laugh. Perhaps Mozart would have found Leitgeb's spluttering efforts more entertaining, but we'll pick Brain's excellently recorded triumph, with the expectation of enjoying it more than once!

CHAMBER MUSIC



Brahms: Sonata No. 2 in E flat, Op. 120, No. 2 (for Clarinet and Piano). Benny Goodman (clarinet) and Nadia Reisenberg (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-629. \$3.85.

No other recording of this work is available. One by Primrose, playing the viola (VM-422), was, until recently, in the catalog. The alternate version, using viola in place of clarinet, is preferred by some because of a greater variety of dynamics and a more subtle phrasing possible with a string instrument. Benny Goodman, of familiar fame in other lines of musical endeavor, is an acknowledged master of his instrument, and exhibits some remarkable clarinet technique in this work. He has obviously spent a lot of time with this music and manifests an understanding feeling for it. His phrasing and coloring are all that a clarinet allows, and his playing of the softer passages is particularly lovely. The second record side is a notable exhibition of finished clarinet playing and phrasing.

Opinions of the present sonata vary. Brahms wrote several works for clarinet for his friend Mühlfeld, whom he met toward the end of his career. Of these,

one of Brahms' biographers claims they are the golden fruits of his late maturity. One of our contemporary reviewers includes them in a long list of Brahms' works which he considers pretentious, and singles this one out as possibly the worst of his works. Well, opinions vary; and rather than uphold one or the other, we will frankly state that this work has a limited appeal. It is nothing for a symphonic fan, who would like to try some chamber music, to be weaned. He had better cut his eye teeth on the Mozart *Clarinet Quintet*. For the seasoned chamber music lover, or budding clarinet virtuoso, this set offers a marvelously played version of one of the few large works for the instrument. The piano part is masterfully handled by Nadia Reisenberg, and the reproduction is well balanced and of great fidelity. S.



OPERA

A Treasury of Grand Opera. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1074. \$4.85.

Wagner: Lohengrin—Prelude to Act I. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. (V-11-9287.)

Leoncavallo: Pagliacci—Prologo: Si può! Un nido di memorie (Act I). Leonard Warren (baritone) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. One side, and **Verdi: Aida**—Ritorna vincitor (Act I). Zinka Milanov (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. (Both sung in Italian.) (V-11-9288.)

Gounod: Faust—Choeur des Soldats (Act IV). RCA Victor Chorale and Orchestra conducted by Robert Shaw. One side, and **Bizet: Carmen**—Habañera: L'amour est un oiseau rebelle (Act I). Gladys Swarthout (mezzo-soprano) with RCA Victor Chorale and Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. (Both sung in French.) (V-11-9289.)

Verdi: La Traviata—Un di, felice eterea (Act I). Licia Albanese (soprano) and Jan Peerce (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. One side, and **Mozart: Don Giovanni**—Il mio tesoro (Act II). James Melton (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Paul Breisch. (Both sung in Italian.) (V-11-9290.)

RCA Victor has gone all out for Grand Opera this month, and record buyers who have been clamoring for fresh operatic recordings will be at least temporarily assuaged. In an album entitled *A Treasury of Grand Opera* is assembled a hodge-podge of excerpts from various operas. Some of the stuff is taken from records already released, but most of the material is new.

Arturo Toscanini's account of the Prelude to *Lohengrin*, which opens the album, has been on the market for some time now; so has James Melton's *Il mio tesoro* from *Don Giovanni*, which is borrowed from his album of operatic arias. But the *Treasury* contains much that has not been released before. Turning over its

pages, we come across Leonard Warren's singing of the *Prologo to Pagliacci*, which emphasizes the fact that Mr. Warren possesses a great voice, but lacks thrust and dramatic tension; Zinka Milanov's *Ritorna Vincitor!* from *Aida*, which is perhaps the most satisfactory of the new releases and which starts out magnificently only to bog down a bit at the end of the record. Further along we come across excerpts from what are certainly the two most popular French operas—*Faust* and *Carmen*. The RCA Victor Chorale and Orchestra under the direction of Robert Shaw offer the *Soldiers' Chorus* from the former opera with carefully balanced tone, but a lack of power in the high tenor passages, while, from the latter opera, this same group aids Gladys Swarthout in the *Habañera* with Erich Leinsdorf in the conductor's chair. Miss Swarthout's *Carmen* sounds amiable and efficient rather than dangerous and temperamental. It is solid singing, however.

On the last record we find Licia Albanese and Jan Peerce coupled for a performance of *Alfredo and Violetta's* first act duet from *Traviata*, *Un di felice eterea*. As is the case with any disc on which Mr. Peerce appears, the record is somewhat overamplified. Miss Albanese sounds very lovely indeed in the heroine's florid measures which she sings with a certain intensity that makes the music exciting. Mr. Peerce is his usual competent self, but we would have been happy had he seen fit to end the duet softly, which is the much desired effect at this point (page Tito Schipa, Mr. Peerce!).

The reappearance of Toscanini's *Lohengrin* and Melton's *Il mio tesoro* only strengthens our former favorable sentiments on these two fine performances. The recording of these excerpts, with the exception of the overamplified duet, is really excellent.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Russian Operatic Arias. (Sung in Russian.) Alexander Kipnis (bass) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Nicolai Berezowsky. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1073. \$3.85.

Tchaikovsky: Eugen Onégin—Prince Gremin's Air (Act III). One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Sadko**—Song of the Viking Guest (Scene 4). (V-11-9284).

Borodin: Prince Igor—Prince Galitsky's Air (Act I). One side, and **Moussorgsky: Boris Godounov**—Come now, comrades, fill up your glass (Act I, Scene 2) with Anna Leskaya (soprano) and Ilya Tamarin (tenor). (V-11-9285).

Dargomijsky: The Roussalka—Miller's Aria (Act I). One side, and **Moussorgsky: Song of the Flea**. (V-11-9286).

Three of the excerpts presented in RCA Victor's album of *Russian Operatic Arias* by Alexander Kipnis are indeed novel and welcome additions to recorded art. These are the Miller's aria from the first act of Dargomijsky's *The Russalka*, a passage from the Inn

Scene in *Boris Godounov*, and Prince Gremin's aria from the last act of Tchaikovsky's *Eugen Onégin*. The rest of the material, which includes Moussorgsky's *The Flea*, the *Song of the Viking Guest* from *Sadko* and Prince Galitsky's *Aria* from *Prince Igor*, is more usual fare and has been popularized on records now for many years through the art of the unforgettable Feodor Chaliapin.

Particularly attractive is the old-world grace and atmosphere of Prince Gremin's aria from *Eugen Onégin*. The Boris excerpt is one of the most colorful in that wonderful opera—the scene when Varlaam, the renegade priest, chants his drunken song while the pretender, Gregory, and the hostess of the Inn discuss the best way to get past the heavily guarded frontier. Anna Leskaya, a soprano (remembered for her part in the American premiere of Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk*), and Ilya Tamarin, tenor, assist Mr. Kipnis in this scene.

Mr. Kipnis seems in fairly good voice. Occasionally he is not quite in tune and some of his upper notes, such as the one in the climax of the *Song of the Viking Guest*, are weak and wobbly. However, there is both authority and artistry in his work. His singing of Moussorgsky's *Flea* shows that he has his own ideas about this song. But then, so have Chaliapin and Tibbett and Nelson Eddy. The magic of Chaliapin's sardonic version has never been approached as far as we are concerned, but Mr. Kipnis registers strongly here, nevertheless.

Accompaniment of the various excerpts is by the Victor Symphony Orchestra, directed by Nicolai Berezowsky, who officiated in a like capacity for Mr. Kipnis' *Boris* album. The recording results are first class and the surfaces of this set unusually smooth.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Wagner: Die Meistersinger—Two Monologues. **Fliegermonolog** (Act II, Scene 3). Two sides, and **Wahnmonolog** (Act III, Scene 1). (Sung in German.) Herbert Janssen (baritone) with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Paul Breisach. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-269. \$2.85.

In an album which bears the title, *Die Meistersinger: Two Monologues*, Herbert Janssen, distinguished Wagnerian baritone of the Metropolitan, sings Hans Sachs's two famous introspective passages—the *Fliegermonolog* and the *Wahnmonolog*. The first of these occurs in the second act of the opera. Sachs, sitting in the doorway of his cobbler's shop, pauses in his work, becomes conscious of the summer night, and reflects on the scent of the elder blossoms which waft a nostalgic breath of youth and spring to him, a middle-aged man. The *Wahnmonolog* is sung by Sachs as he sits reading the Bible in his study (beginning of the third act). He meditates on the fact that the world has gone mad, that men live in a babbling madhouse, squabbling, seeking self-gain . . . "My dear old Nuremberg!" he exclaims, as he turns towards the

window with its view of the ancient gabled town.

These two passages contain the whole essence of the nature of Hans Sachs, his very soul. Wagner responds to the challenge of the situation with his most truthful and profound music, for Sachs is the character around whom the entire operatic tapestry of *Die Meistersinger* revolves.

Columbia is to be thanked for recording these supreme moments of a matchless score. Except for the *Wahnmonolog*, contained in RCA Victor's complete third act (Album M-537), there were no recordings available of these two passages.

Herbert Janssen has not the ideal Hans Sach's voice. It lacks the weight and depth and is not capable of that noble expansion of tone which gives this music its greatest effect. However, in all fairness to Mr. Janssen, it must be reported that he sings with great care, with meticulous feeling for the text and with the phrasing of the highly cultured Wagnerian artist he assuredly is.

Paul Breisach and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra know what they are about, but they seldom rise beyond an excellent routine. Reproduction is generally good, but the sound engineers have on occasion allowed the orchestra to engulf the singer's not too substantial tones. Surfaces also seem good in this particular set.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Meyerbeer: L'Africana—O Paradiso! (Act IV.) One side, and **Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera**—Recit.: Forse la soglia attinse, and Aria: Ma se m'e forza perderti (Act III). (Sung in Italian.) Jan Peerce (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9295). \$1.

Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera—Eri tu (Act III). One side, and **Verdi: Otello**—Credo in un Dio crudel (Act II). (Sung in Italian.) Leonard Warren (baritone) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9292). \$1.

Massenet: Hérodiade—Vision fugitive (Act III). One side, and **Thomas: Hamlet**—Chanson Bachique (Act II). (Sung in French.) Robert Merrill (baritone) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-11-9291). \$1.

After hearing Leonard Warren's record of *Eri tu?*, we took from our shelves a record of the same aria by Pasquale Amato and played it through. Despite thin orchestral support and the acoustical technique of 1915, we were astounded at the contrast the two performances created. Did people really sing these things, in those days, more as though they meant it? Certainly the truth of Amato's performance, his complete dramatic conviction in the situation, makes Warren sound like an oratorio singer whose first-class voice is producing well-placed sounds. Warren lacks the brilliance, the spirit, the tonal contrasts of the earlier singer. His *Eri tu?* emerges as the safe and sound traversal of a demanding aria by a generally well produced voice. Isn't there more to operatic singing than this?

We say all this with the full realization that Warren's is probably the outstanding baritone voice of its day. But where earlier singers like Amato and Ruffo sound brilliant and affirmative, Warren sounds meandering and plaintive as he guides his superb voice with obvious care through the pitfalls of the beautiful Verdian measures. The baritone's singing of the *Credo* from *Otello* is considerably better, but still lacking in imagination and dramatic conviction.

Also afflicted with sleeping-sickness (from which so many of our present-day tone-producers seem to suffer) is Robert Merrill, offering his first two operatic solos for RCA Victor. These are the *Drinking Song* from *Hamlet* and the more familiar *Vision Fugitive* from *Hérodiade*. This lack of spirit is particularly true of the *Hamlet* number, which is set by Jean Paul Morel (a conductor new to records) at a far too slow and heavy tempo for its brilliant character. Mr. Merrill's voice is lovely and fresh in timbre, flowing in character, but the text of these arias apparently means little to him and his pronunciation of the French words, particularly the vowel sounds, is often faulty. The balance between voice and orchestra is decidedly off in the *Hérodiade* aria, the singer's high notes being covered by the orchestra.

RCA Victor also comes forward with a new Jan Peerce coupling. This combines *O Paradiso!* from *L'Africana*, and the aria, *Ma se m'e forza perderti* from *Un Ballo in Maschera*, with its opening recitative, *Forse la soglia*. Like all Peerce records, these newest additions are badly overamplified, a situation which only accentuates the singer's lack of dynamic contrasts. This tenor has a naturally fine voice which he produces in an honest and forthright way, but with which he is apparently incapable of playing and creating variety of tone-color. All Mr. Peerce's tones sound alike; they are all produced at the identical volume-level. This makes for monotony. As an illustration, take Mr. Peerce's singing of the phrase *O Paradiso!* Would this not be more appropriate sung softly? The passage is marked *p* and *dolcissimo* (very sweetly). The aria from *Ballo in Maschera*, an opera in which Mr. Peerce had a recent and deserved success at the Metropolitan, is a welcome addition. Reproduction and surfaces of these records are generally excellent.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Bellini: Norma—Casta Diva (Act 1). One side, and **Ponchielli: La Gioconda**—Suicidio (Act IV). (Sung in Italian.) Zinka Milanov (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra and Mixed Chorus conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9293). \$1.

Wagner: Die Götterdämmerung—Erzählung der Waltraute (Act I). (Sung in German.) Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-11-9296). \$1.

New records by Zinka Milanov are always an event, for Mme. Milanov is the possessor of one of the few

glamor-voices of the present day. She is a true *prima-donna*, the inheritor of a legitimate grand-manner. Her voice has both the penetrating energy of tone and the command of an impressively sustained vocal line. These qualities make her interpretations outstanding in this age of indifferent singing. This month, Mme. Milanov is heard in the difficult *Casta Diva* from Bellini's *Norma*, and the *Suicidio* from Ponchielli's melodramatic *La Gioconda*.

The *Casta Diva* is preceded by the heroic recitative, *Sediziose Voci!* and followed by one verse of the aria proper. The singer performs with authority and with sustained beauty of tone. Her rhythmic pulse might be firmer, her scales in the final cadenza more accurate, otherwise this is an authentic performance, which takes its place in the long line of recorded *Casta Divas*, among which those by Lilli Lehmann, Calvé, Burzio, Boninsegna, Raisa, Ponselle, Muzio and Cigna come to mind.

The *Suicidio* aria is beautifully sung. Here again Mme. Milanov finds the authentic style for this music. She is not afraid to unleash her chest tones, without which a performance of this particular aria is ineffective (listen to Jeritza's record, for example). Very beautiful is Mme. Milanov's high pianissimo A and the phrase which follows on the words *E un di leggiadre volavan l'ore*. The singer's voice has been very honestly recorded and Frieder Weissmann gives excellent support with full orchestra. A chorus assists Mme. Milanov in the final measures of the *Casta Diva*.

While Mme. Milanov occupies herself with Bellini and Ponchielli, Blanche Thebom turns once more to the Wagnerian repertoire with her newly recorded Waltraute's *Narrative* from *Die Götterdämmerung*. An excellent record by Kerstin Thorborg already exists of this passage, and there is also Schumann-Heink's abbreviated but unforgettable record of this dramatic scene, so that it is hard to see just why Victor might not have used its imagination and gotten Miss Thebom to record passages which are in dire need of attention—some of Venus' music from *Tannhauser*, for instance. However, the ways of the recording companies are hard to fathom, and so it will here suffice to say that this is probably Miss Thebom's best record to date. It serves to demonstrate the seriousness and the care for detail with which this fine young artist evidently approaches her work. Frieder Weissmann's orchestral support is exciting and the recording and surfaces are all they should be.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Wagner: Lohengrin—Bridal Chorus (Act III). (Sung in German.) One side, and **Verdi: Il Trovatore**—Anvil Chorus (Act II). (Sung in Italian.) RCA Victor Choral and Orchestra conducted by Robert Shaw. 1-12" disc (V-11-9294). \$1.

These recordings sound to us like samples of just what they are—choral numbers sung by a well-trained American chorus. They do not sound like selections from a German and an Italian opera. They are sung

in the style of an American choral society; they lack the operatic tradition. Those who are familiar with opera will very likely realize our point when they listen to these renditions. They have been very nicely recorded.

Strauss, J.: Die Fledermaus—Mein Herr Marquis (Act II). One side, and **Strauss, J.: Die Fledermaus**—Spiel' ich die Unschuld vom Lande (Act III). (Sung in German.) Elisabeth Schumann (soprano) with Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Karl Alwin. 1-10" disc (V-E-545). \$1.85.

This little disc has been in the HMV catalog for several years and, while numerous copies of it have been imported, there always seems to be a steady demand for it. If you do not have a copy, and you would like to add it to your library, the fact that a few copies were received in a recent shipment from abroad will be interesting news.

Elisabeth Schumann, as you know, is quite at home in such selections and she is well supported by the Vienna State Opera Orchestra under the able direction of Karl Alwin.

Donizetti: L'Elisir D'Amore—Down Her Pale Cheek (Act II). One side, and **Gounod: Romeo and Juliet**—'Tis love! Ah, 'Tis Love! (Act II). (Sung in English.) Heddle Nash (tenor) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind. 1-12" disc (V-C-3492). \$1.90.

Last month we reviewed a group of French and Italian operatic selections by various English artists sung in their native tongue. While Mr. de Schauensee, who wrote the review, was not overly enthusiastic about the recordings in general, he had a very good word for the high artistry of Heddle Nash.

Despite the faint praise of the review, these discs caused quite a furor among those persons who are championing the cause of foreign opera in English and dealers report that there were numerous calls for these recordings. It would seem therefore that there is a ready-made market for the present disc.

Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera—Di tu se fedele (Barcarola, Act I). One side, and **Verdi: Rigoletto**—Questa o quella (Act I). (Sung in Italian.) Jussi Björling (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Nils Grevillius. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1837). \$1.85.

Puccini: Turandot—Nessun Dorma (Act III). One side, and **Leoncavallo: La Mattinata**. (Sung in Italian.) Jussi Björling (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Nils Grevillius. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1841). \$1.85.

Those who are interested in collecting the recordings of Jussi Björling will probably be interested in this pair of discs that recently arrived from abroad, although two of the selections were recently re-pressed on a domestic Victor record. The selections on the domestic record (V-10-1200) are: *Rigoletto*—Questa o quella and *Turandot*—Nessun dorma.

Smetana: Die verkaufte Braut—Mit der Mutter sank zu grabe (Act I). One side, and **Smetana: Die verkaufte Braut**—So find ich dich (Mein lieber Schatz) (Act III). (Sung in German.) Margarete Teschemacher (soprano) and Marcel Wittrisch (tenor) with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. 1–12" disc (V-DB-4538). \$2.50.

The present disc contains two of the best available recordings from Smetana's *The Bartered Bride*—particularly effective is the lovely duet from Act I. It alone is worth the price of the record.

CHORAL



Folk Songs and Ballads of America. Margaret Dodd Singers. 2–10" discs in album. Hargail Set HN-705. \$2.50.

Here is as charming a little album as one may come across in many days of searching for the pleasing and unusual. The Margaret Dodd Singers, consisting of two sopranos, an alto, a tenor, a baritone and a bass, have had unique arrangements of these ballads made for them and sing them *a cappella*. All of the voices are of excellent quality and they blend most beautifully. We were fascinated with these renditions and we could not resist playing these discs through several times, although there were many other items awaiting our attention and the hour for going to press was only minutes away. The reproduction is very good.

PIANO



Beethoven: Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13 ("Pathétique"). Rudolph Serkin (piano). 3–12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-648. \$3.85.

Last month our review of the *Pathétique Sonata* played by Erno Balogh suggested a more dramatic reading of this work would be welcome. During the past week Columbia officially announced this new version by Serkin, and the review album arrived one day before press deadline. It has been well worth the time to play this set through a number of times, for it contains a highly dramatic rendition of the popular *Pathétique*. The opening *Grave* indicates a larger framework and a more individual performance than Balogh gave us. A greater range of dynamics prevails through the principal subject and second subject; and Serkin observes the repeat before playing the development (which accounts for the extra record side in the first movement). The second movement has a fine stateliness with a deeply etched melodic line; his playing of the secondary subjects is restrained with a very controlled tempo. The infectious rondo moves along at a great clip, with more splash and abandon and less restraint than Balogh's.

The present performance will prove entirely satisfying to a large majority of those seeking a good recording of this work. Whether or not it can be

termed a definitive performance is hard to estimate, for it is an individual approach by Serkin, although it is not erratic or mannered. It is just a deeply felt rendition, in a fittingly large framework, and always in control. We enjoyed it—felt pretty well satisfied after hearing it, as its message reached down inside us, rather than just letting the notes pass in review before us.

As for the reproduction of the present set, let it be said that it is satisfactory, and will not distort the music. But we had the feeling this was a studio job. There's no two ways about it, a grand piano needs some kind of a hall with acoustics just as surely as does an orchestra. Compare the recorded tone of this piano with that of the "*Emperor*" Concerto (Col. M-500)—same artist, same manufacturer. The piano tones in the "*Emperor*" have a ring to them. Let us have that recording technique again in some future piano recording. S.

Oscar Levant Plays Chopin. Oscar Levant (piano). 4–12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-649. \$4.85.

C-71856D. *Etude No. 5 in G flat, Op. 10, No. 5* ("Black Key Etude") and *Etude No. 12 in C minor, Op. 10, No. 12* ("Revolutionary"). One side, and *Etude No. 3 in E, Op. 10, No. 3*.

C-71857D. *Nocturne No. 5 in F sharp, Op. 15, No. 2*. One side, and *Nocturne No. 2 in E flat, Op. 9, No. 2*.

C-71858D. *Berceuse in D flat, Op. 57*. One side, and *Polonaise No. 3 in A, Op. 40, No. 1* ("Military").

C-71859D. *Waltz No. 7 in C sharp minor, Op. 64, No. 2*. One side, and *Waltz No. 11 in G flat, Op. 70, No. 1*, and *Etude No. 4 in C sharp minor, Op. 10, No. 4*.

When one reads some of the various articles in encyclopedias, books on music history, books on music appreciation, and wherever piano music is mentioned, the high regard and veneration of Chopin is always unanimous. Without exception, he is considered one of the greatest piano composers, and by many the very greatest of them all. True, he was not one to develop a theme—it was presented, and ornamented and embellished, and then dropped. Rather than an architect, he was an improvisator, and wrote for the most part accompanied melody. His writing was never polyphonic, and it owed nothing to his predecessors. Above all, his originality was striking; melody, harmony, rhythm, ornamentation, style, everything was highly refined and developed by him who thought only of the piano and piano effects. His employment of tempo rubato is one of the most misinterpreted phases of his music today. Chopin always kept a metronome on his piano and is quoted as having said "the singing hand may deviate from strict time, but the accompanying hand must keep time. . . . Fancy a tree with its branches swayed by the wind—the stem is the steady time, the moving leaves are the melodic inflections."

Fancy, then, our Mr. Levant trying to play Chopin.

It has never before been our displeasure to hear anything to compare to this man trying to play Chopin. We can understand Pauline Alpert, Rosalinda, Jan August, or any of the other folks playing a Chopin tune in their own style, obviously distorting it to their type of music making. But when one is evidently trying to portray the music of Chopin as it is *written* and turns out a recorded performance for posterity such as this, kindly give us Casadesus, Maryla Jonas, Gieseking, Petri, Kilenyi, or someone else on Columbia's roster. Levant has not the slightest affinity for Chopin, and his performances of these thrice-familiar works are uniformly poor. We do not care either for the reproduction of the piano; it sounds rumbly and smeary.

If Mr. Levant's numerous fans wish a collection of familiar Chopin played by him, here it is.

S.

Franck: Variations Symphoniques. Myra Hess (piano) with the City of Birmingham Orchestra conducted by Basil Cameron. 2-12" discs (V-C-3237 and V-C-3238). \$3.80.

Of the several recordings that have been made of this Franck composition for piano and orchestra, the present one by Myra Hess and the Birmingham Orchestra seems to us the preferable one. It has been a long time since any copies of it have been received from abroad and so the news that some arrived in a recent shipment will be welcomed by interested collectors.

Chopin: Nocturne in E flat, Op. 9, No. 2. One side, and **Chopin: Three Etudes—F minor, Op. 10, No. 9; F minor, Op. 25, No. 2; F major, Op. 25, No. 3.** Solomon (piano). 1-12" (V-C-3345). \$1.90.

Solomon has become so popular in this country, largely through his superb recordings, that it is only necessary for a dealer to let it be known that he has some in stock for him to dispose of them instantly. The present disc should be no exception, for Solomon is in top form in his renditions of the lovely Chopin pieces. The English recorders have accomplished most faithful piano reproduction.

VOCAL



Songs by Jane Powell. Jane Powell (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Carmen Dragon. 2-10" discs in album. Columbia Set X-271. \$2.25.

Schubert: Ave Maria. One side, and **Delibes: The Maids of Cadiz.** (C-4352M.)

Marcotte: I Think of You. One side, and **Herbert: Italian Street Song** (from "Naughty Marietta"). (C-4353M.)

Jane Powell, the young M-G-M star, who appeared with such great success in the recent picture, "Holiday in Mexico," has recorded four selections which she sang in that production. For Miss Powell's fans this album is very likely a must.

American Songs. Helen Traubel (soprano) with male chorus and orchestra conducted by Charles O'Connell. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-639. \$4.85.

Bishop: Home, Sweet Home. One side, and **Bayly: Long, Long Ago** (C-71838D).

Kern: All the Things You Are (from "Very Warm for May"). One side, and **Rodgers: Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'** (from "Oklahoma") (C-71839D).

Foster: Old Folks at Home. One side, and **Bland: Carry Me Back to Old Virginny** (C-71840).

Bond: I Love You Truly. One side, and **Bond: A Perfect Day** (C-71841D).

And now it is Helen Traubel's turn to receive what our recording companies consider glamor-treatment. The noted soprano sings eight more or less simple songs, some of them folk songs, which are dressed up by Columbia in no uncertain terms. All the familiar trappings are present: lush orchestral introductions and interludes, choruses humming and weaving harmonies around the soloist, snatches of tunes borrowed from other compositions. It is a pity that such songs as *Old Folks at Home*, *Carry Me Back to Old Virginny*, *Home, Sweet Home* (which incidentally is British and not American, and the title of the album informs us that these are American Songs) could not have been treated less elaborately, and placed on 10-inch surfaces. Frankly, spread out and ornamented, the contents of this album are rather a bore.

Mme. Traubel's singing is of exquisite beauty. Temporarily released from the ardors of Wagner, the singer is able to relax with the result that her tone gains in loveliness. Her velvety voice is a constant enchantment to the ear. Except for an occasional scoopy attack, this is great singing and the soprano's diction is an example of refinement and clarity. A distinguished performance as far as she is concerned! The recording is technically altogether admirable. Incidentally, one of the surprises in this album is Mme. Traubel's captivating singing of Jerome Kern's *All the Things You Are*. Who would have thought it?

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Songs of Richard Strauss. Lotte Lehman (soprano) with piano accompaniments by Paul Ulanowsky. (Sung in German.) 2-10" discs in album. Columbia Set X-270. \$2.25.

C-17384D. **Staendchen**, Op. 17, No. 2. One side, and **Morgen**, Op. 27, No. 4.

C-17385D. **Allerseelen**, Op. 10, No. 8. One side, and **Zueignung**, Op. 10, No. 1.

Lotte Lehmann has always been this reviewer's favorite interpreter of the songs of Richard Strauss. She has the imagination, the temperament. This month Columbia comes along with a little album containing four of Strauss' most famous songs by this fascinating soprano.

There is no reason why these two short ten-inch

records could not have been released separately, without benefit of album. If Columbia was determined on another Lehmann album, why not have gone to the trouble of having the singer record ten or at least eight of the Strauss lieder?

The four selected are *Staendchen*, *Morgen*, *Allerseelen* and *Zueignung*. It is wonderful how they bloom afresh under Mme. Lehmann's treatment. Her voice sounds like the voice of a young woman, a positively dewy voice, especially in the first two songs. For those who fear that Mme. Lehmann's upper voice is a thing of the past, we are happy to say that she sings all of these songs in their high key, twice sustaining a well taken A natural (in *Staendchen* and *Zueignung*). Particularly lovely in feeling for its text and vocal line is the singer's voicing of *Morgen*, a song that requires great imagination. *Allerseelen* is also presented with that sincerity and directness of feeling that are so characteristic of this great artist.

Paul Ulanowsky is admirable at the piano, and it is a pleasure to report that Mme. Lehmann's voice has been beautifully recorded.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Im Maien (Potpourri of Songs). (Sung in German.)

Anni Frind (soprano) and Günter Frank (baritone) with choir and orchestra conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. 1-10" disc (V-EG-3900). \$1.35.

As the title "In May" implies, this disc contains a medley of little German songs appropriate for the spring season. They are charmingly sung and nicely recorded.

Blue Skies. Bing Crosby, with Fred Astaire, Trudy Erwin, and chorus and orchestra conducted by John Scott Trotter. 5-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-481. \$4.50.

Those who have seen Paramount's feature picture "Blue Skies" will need no introduction to this new Decca album, for it contains ten Irving Berlin selections from that movie. The producers selected a number of Berlin tunes that have more or less lived through the years, starting with *I'll See You in C-U-B-A*, the hit of the first prohibition years. Among the others will be found *Blue Skies*; *I've Got My Captain Working for Me Now*; *Puttin' on the Ritz* and others.

This album is a jolly little number and made for enjoyment only. A booklet with the words of each song and the plot of the picture adds to its attractiveness.

Rendezvous at Lehárs (potpourri of Lehár Melodies). (Sung in German.) Rauta Waara (soprano) and Peter Anders (tenor) with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Dr. Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 1-12" disc (RF-R70034). \$2.50.

The present disc was dubbed from the Telefunken record, which was reasonably popular in this country before World War II. It is pressed on Vinylite, and contains a number of Lehár's most pleasing melodies.

Liszt: Es muss ein Wunderbares sein. One side, and **Reger: Waldeinsamkeit**. (Sung in German.) Ursula Van Diemen (soprano) with piano accompaniment by Arpad Sandor. 1-10" disc (V-EG-813). \$1.35.

These two lovely little songs, one by Franz Liszt and the other by Max Reger, are beautifully sung by Miss Van Diemen. This disc has been in the European catalogs for several years but has not been generally available since before the war. Those who are interested in such recordings will be glad to know that a few copies of it arrived in a recent shipment from abroad.

Famous Barber Shop Ballads. The Mills Brothers. 5-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-476. \$4.50.

For those who like the Mills Brothers, this album will be a great joy. They are at their best, and the selections that they have chosen fit them like a glove. Barber shop harmony at its best and well recorded. Mills Brothers fans will enjoy reading the little booklet that is included with this album. It gives a brief but interesting account of the meteoric rise of this quartet in the amusement world.

The selections in this album are: *You Tell Me Your Dream*; *Sweet Adeline*; *My Gal Sal*; *Just a Dream of You, Dear*; *Meet Me Tonight in Dreamland*; *Can't You Hear Me Callin' Caroline*; *Moonlight Bay*; *On the Banks of the Wabash*; *Way Down Home*; and *When You Were Sweet Sixteen*.

Songs From My Heart. Frank Parker (tenor) with Paul Baron and his orchestra. 3-10" discs in album. Mercury Set A-11. \$3.

The ever-popular Frank Parker has selected a group of songs that are particularly well-liked by his many fans and made recordings of them for this album. If you know Mr. Parker and like his voice and style of singing you'll probably go for this album in a big way. The selections are: *You and the Night and the Music*; *Yours is My Heart Alone*; *All the Things You Are*; *My Heart Stood Still*; *Quiereme Mucho*; and *Isle of Capri*.

Al Jolson. Al Jolson with orchestras conducted by Carmen Dragon and Morris Stoloff. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-469. \$3.75.

Although Al Jolson does not appear in the new Columbia picture, "The Jolson Story"—he is portrayed by Larry Parks—he has recorded many of the songs that he made famous and which are sung in the movie. The selections in this album are: *April Showers*; *Swanee*; *California, Here I Come*; *Rock-a-bye Your Baby with a Dixie Melody*; *You Made Me Love You*; *Ma Blushin' Rosie*; *Sonny Boy*; and *My Mammy*. All of the above, except *Sonny Boy*, are featured in the picture.

Al and these songs will bring a lot of pleasant memories to us old veterans of World War I, and will give our children an opportunity to hear the songs that we thought were hot stuff in our courtin' days.

CHILDREN



Kleinsinger: Pee-Wee the Piccolo. Paul Wing (narrator) with Russ Case and his Orchestra. 2-10" discs in album. Victor Set Y-322. \$2.50.

Early this year, an album of children's records was issued called "Tubby the Tuba" and it caught on like wildfire. It has enjoyed the largest sale of any children's album released this year. "Tubby the Tuba" was a fascinating story by Paul Tripp with an ingenious musical setting by George Kleinsinger. And now this clever team has produced "Peewee the Piccolo." The story is told by Paul Wing and the music is furnished by a 40-piece Little Symphony under the direction of Russ Case.

As in the previous tale, the characters are taken by the various instruments of the orchestra and the plot hinges on the fact that Peewee Piccolo has lost his solo which he is to play at the concert. He goes out into the woods where he had been practicing it the day before with hope of finding it. He finds that Mr. Owl has found it and won't give it up. He finally makes a deal with Mr. Owl and hurries back to the concert just in the nick of time. It is all very exciting and the kiddies will love it.

AND here is the secret of this, as well as the former recording—our young listeners will learn the various instruments of the orchestra and how they sound without knowing that that is one of the important functions of these albums.

DICTION



Poe: The Cask of Amontillado. Sidney Greenstreet (speaking) with supporting cast, sound effects, and orchestra conducted by Victor Young. 2-10" discs in album. Decca Set DA-479. \$2.50.

A new departure in the realm of recording has been accomplished by Decca in this remarkable recorded version of Edgar Allan Poe's gruesome story of *The Cask of Amontillado*. The distinguished actor, Sidney Greenstreet, has been chosen for the leading role and his performance carries that feeling of subtle terror that makes this recording a real thriller. Very clever original music by Victor Young helps greatly to provide just the right atmosphere. All in all, it is a superb production.

This album may not have a wide appeal but it will not be because of its lack of quality. The number of persons interested in such recordings is naturally quite limited.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

Letters of Composers. An Anthology 1603-1945. Compiled and edited by Gertrude Norman and Miriam Lubell Shrifte. xviii + 422 + xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

The Borzoi Book of Ballets. By Grace Robert. xvii+362+xxiii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.50.

Listening to the Orchestra. By Kitty Barne. 299 pp. Illustrated. The Bobbs-Merrill Company (Indianapolis). Price \$2.75.

Handel—By Herbert Weinstock. xvi+326+xlili pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.00.

Talking Wax. By Leroy Hughbanks. 142 pp. The Hobson Book Press (New York). Price \$2.50.

Sergei Prokofiev: His Musical Life. By Israel V. Nestyev. Translated from the Russian by Rose Prokofieva. Introduction by Sergei Eisenstein. xxvii+193+xiv pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

Impresario. A memoir by S. Hurok in collaboration with Ruth Goode. 291 pp. Illustrated. Random House (New York). Price \$3.

Theme and Variations. An autobiography by Bruno Walter. Translated from the German by James A. Galston. Illustrated. xi+344+xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Biblestone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, S—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargall, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radlufunken, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

Forza - p. 4 (CETRA)

The New Records

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Two Worlds of Music. By Berta Geissmar. 327 pp. Creative Age Press, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.

Berta Geissmar, who has spent her adult life largely in the opera houses of Europe, first as secretary to Wilhelm Furtwängler and then in the same capacity with Sir Thomas Beecham, has written a most interesting running account of the musical life of the last quarter of a century. Her book falls roughly into three sections. It depicts the musical life in Germany immediately before Hitler, the second section covers Germany during the Hitler regime, and the concluding section is devoted to England immediately before and during World War II. Dr. Geissmar has had ample opportunity to meet and in many cases become intimately acquainted with most of the great musical personalities of her time. Thus her manuscript is packed with personal experiences and innumerable anecdotes. A glance at the index reveals a most impressive list of the great and the near great in the musical world of our day.

Of prime importance is Dr. Geissmar's revealing picture of the musical life in Germany before Hitler and her description of how that was gradually strangled by the totalitarian regime that took over the control of both the governmental and cultural life of the people of that ill-fated country. The author brings out most forcefully how impossible it is for the cultural life of a people to grow and flourish in a land where personal liberty does not prevail. A lesson that we may all take to heart with much profit.

Fortunately Dr. Geissmar's book is not a preachment. The impression that the reader gets, he gains as he goes along with the author in her interesting work behind the scenes in the great opera houses and concert halls in both

Europe and England. This is a fascinating book for anyone who is at all interested in the happenings in the musical world since World War I, and it is a "must" for those persons who are particularly interested in its two leading personalities, Wilhelm Furtwängler and Sir Thomas Beecham.

* * *

A Treasury of Stephen Foster. Foreword by Deems Taylor. Historical Notes by John Tasker Howard. Arrangements by Ray Lev and Dorothy Berliner Commins. Illustrated by William Sharp. 222 pp. Random House (New York). Price \$3.95.

For one familiar with the more popular of Foster's tunes (and who hasn't heard at least a dozen of them many times?), some of the arrangements in this treasury will be surprising. The usual rhythm applied to *My Old Kentucky Home* in song books for school use are much smoother than those presented here. We would assume that the arrangers, Ray Lev and Dorothy Commins, used the original published versions of Foster's songs as a basis for their work. The songs, as presented here, have a more earthy quality, which results from the tasteful and varied accompaniments provided, and especially from the jerky rhythms which have been restored.

Each of the fifty songs in this book is preceded by a short historical background and a picture illustrating the song. These full-page illustrations are a bit smooth for the character of the music; but they admittedly set an appropriate picture for the song. Mr. Howard's brief biographical sketch of Foster states the highlights of the man's life, a tragic one, indeed.

The reading matter of *A Treasury of Stephen Foster* is hardly sufficient to warrant its acquisition. It is for the fifty songs to be sung and

played that this book is valuable, and the reading matter which accompanies it adds to the enjoyment without being obtrusive. Considering the fact that the greatest country on earth has no folk songs, recognizable as such, this volume of Foster takes on added importance; for his music and the Negro spirituals come closest to that which we lack. And of even greater importance, the man left us real lovable melodies which will live through ages because they are simple and appealing—and great.

S.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

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ORCHESTRA



Moussorgsky—orch. Ravel: **Pictures at an Exhibition.** Seven sides, and **Moussorgsky: The Fair at Sorotchinski**—Gopak. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-641. \$4.85.

There are many persons, who like this work, who prefer the Ravel orchestration. For them, this set will be welcome, as it is a fine reading by Rodzinski and very well reproduced. Koussevitzky's early Victor set (M-102) has been regarded highly for these many years. The only other recording was on Polydor. Caillet's orchestration was recorded by Ormandy, and Stokowski's orchestration was recorded by him for both Victor and Columbia. The Stokowski orchestration still appeals to us as the most impressive and colorful, and his Victor recording, with the Philadelphia Orchestra (M-706) is as exciting an event as ever happened on records.

While strolling through the galleries examining a memorial exhibition of Victor Hartmann's pictures, Moussorgsky, deeply affected by the loss of his departed friend, conceived the idea of composing a suite of piano pieces based on the pictures. His in-

spiration was touched by the divine spark, for the resulting suite was composed rapidly and enthusiastically. While the piano score is remarkable (and still preferred by a few), posterity seems to have proved the master's choice of the piano, as a medium of his expression, a poor one. Altogether six orchestrators have been moved to tackle this suite. The three mentioned above, as well as M. Touthmalov, Sir Henry Wood, and Leonidas Leonardi. And yet another was vitally interested, for it was Koussevitzky who suggested the idea to Ravel.

Columbia has supplied two pages of notes with this set which include illuminating descriptions of each of the ten pictures. The eighth side, *Gopak*, provides a tasty encore. Altogether, a worthy set for every collection—not to stand on the shelf, but to be played and heard and enjoyed for its color, power and appeal.

S.

Frank Sinatra Conducts Music of Alec Wilder. Columbia String Orchestra conducted by Frank Sinatra with Mitchell Miller (oboe and English horn), Julius Baker (flute), and Harold Goltzer (Bassoon). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-637. \$3.85.

The October 26, 1946 issue of The New Yorker magazine ran the first of three "Profiles" of Frank Sinatra. The third paragraph of this fine and lengthy article mentioned the recording of this album. When Sinatra told Emanuel Sacks, of Columbia, that he wanted to conduct, Mr. Sacks reminded Sinatra that he could not read music. Of course, Sinatra won (his records sell about ten million a year), and when the recording sessions were over, Sacks admitted Sinatra had made some beautiful records.

The picture on the album cover of this set shows Sinatra conducting, with a music stand in front of him—he is obviously reading the score (?).

Anyhow, the main point of issue is the music, as it should be in every case, and not the performers. Alec Wilder is claimed by neither the jazz musicians nor the serious musicians; but his music lies somewhere between the two. The six numbers which comprise this set are titled: *Air for Oboe*; *Air for Bassoon*; *Air for Flute*; *Air for English Horn*; *Slow Dance*; and *Theme and Variations*. The four airs use string orchestra accompaniment (with occasional percussion touches), while the final two selections use the string orchestra with woodwind octet and harpsichord.

There is no denying the absolute simplicity and charm of every bar of music in the album. Sinatra heard some of it one day and decided at once that something should be done about it, so we have to thank him for its presentation here. The air for the oboe is a marvelously grateful piece for that instrument, and bears—it practically commanded us—repeated hearings. The final two ensemble numbers are well scored to our ears. Once again (as is Mil-

haud's message in his delightful *Suite Francais* reviewed last month), we are grateful to a composer whose message is brief, and without needless repetition, labored development, and general boiling around.

If you don't like Frankie, The Voice, just forget about him; for the music of this album may very likely bring you pleasant enjoyment, and you will promptly forget it is conducted by Francis Albert Sinatra. S.

Stravinsky: Ebony Concerto. The Woody Herman Orchestra conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 1-12" disc (C-7479M). \$1.00.

We are sure that none of our staff could do better than Columbia's publicity department in introducing this unusual record to our readers and so we will quote Columbia's announcement of this disc in full:

"Woody Herman's recording of Igor Stravinsky's 'Ebony Concerto,' has long been awaited by jazz and classical music lovers.

"The 'Ebony Concerto,' composed by Stravinsky especially for Herman and his Herd, was first presented at Carnegie Hall March 25, 1946, and is released for the first time this month in recorded form.

"The famous Russian composer, long a follower of American jazz, became interested in Herman and his band after listening to some of Woody's Columbia records played over the radio. Unknown to Stravinsky, Woody and his bandsmen had also long been fans of Stravinsky. After hearing the recordings, Stravinsky decided to write the 'Ebony Concerto' especially for the famous clarinetist and his orchestra, thus effecting one of the most extraordinary unions of the two schools of musical thought.

"The 'Concerto' is in three movements. The first is a sonatina. The second movement is in three parts, suggesting the blues theme, one of the basic moods of jazz. Here Stravinsky utilizes an unorthodox instrumentation of reeds and muted brass, a combination which this composer has used before in symphonic works. In the final movement, low clarinets and other sections of the ensemble offer variations of the earlier themes in a striking and exciting manner.

"Stravinsky has employed two unorthodox jazz instruments, the harp and French horn in the 'Concerto.' Flip Phillips, on the tenor saxophone, Mickey Flous on the bass clarinet and Woody himself on the clarinet are the featured instrumental soloists. Stravinsky himself conducts the 'Herman Herd' in an exciting recording."

Järnefelt: Praeludium. One side, and **Järnefelt: Berceuse.** National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Kindler. 1-10" disc (V-10-1245). 75c.

Two pleasing little tunes by the Finnish composer, Armas Järnefelt (1869-), nicely played by the National Symphony under the direction of Hans Kindler. Not music of a great moment but better than the average light music that is being turned out today.

Music of Sigmund Romberg. Andre Kostelanetz and his orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-635. \$3.75.

Kostelanetz now turns his attention to Sigmund Romberg and this album is the result. As one might expect it contains that noted orchestra leader's arrangements of some of the more popular Romberg selections. This fully describes this album and nothing more need be said except that the recording is excellent.

The selections chosen by Mr. Kostelanetz are: *Will You Remember?*; *One Kiss*; *The Desert Song*; *Romance*; *Deep in My Heart, Dear*; *When I Grow Too Old to Dream*; *Song of Love*; and *Auf Wiedersehen*.

CONCERTO



Gruenberg: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 47. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 4-12" discs in album. Victor M-1079. \$4.85.

Here is some contemporary American music! Louis Gruenberg, best known as the composer of the effective *Emperor Jones*, finished the *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* at Beverly Hills, California, on August 7, 1944. It was commissioned by the celebrated violinist, Jascha Heifetz, who had earlier commissioned a violin concerto from William Walton, England's brilliant young composer.

Mr. Gruenberg has written a most palatable piece of music. It is divided into the accustomed three sections. The opening *Introduction Rhapsodic*, which constitutes the first movement, is of wild gypsy character with the violin darting about in sudden flights and figurations against a background of more or less modern and shifting harmonies. This first movement takes 18 minutes to play, which seemed a little excessive, given the lack of invention and variety in Mr. Gruenberg's music over this period of time. The second movement sounds thoroughly American (where the first did not), for it employs two Negro Spirituals, *Oh, Holy Lord!* and *Master Jesus*, which are interrupted at one point by a brief dancelike episode, also of Negro derivation. The third movement adheres to *Americana*, for the atmosphere of a barn-dance and a revival-meeting have been Mr. Gruenberg's preoccupation, the composer endeavoring to imitate, at one point, a hill-billy fiddler. Here we also find an interlude, this time of a nostalgic and introspective nature.

Mr. Gruenberg, who is said to have been in close collaboration with Heifetz during the composition of this score, writes with great facility and brilliance for the violin. His music is idiomatic and symptomatic of the times we live in.

The composer has been fortunate in getting such an admirable recording for his work. Heifetz, obviously enthused over a work which he has inspired,

is never better. And need we say anything that has not been said about the thrice-admirable Pierre Montaux and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra?

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

OPERA



Verdi: La Forza del Destino (complete recording). (Sung in Italian). Maria Caniglia, Ebe Stignani, Tancredi Pasero, Ernesto Dominici, Galliano Masini, Carlo Tagliabue, Saturno Meletti, Liana Avogadro, Dario Caselli, Giuseppe Nessi, Chorus and Orchestra of E.I.A.R. conducted by Gino Marinuzzi. 18-12" discs, with libretto and albums (manual sequence only) (Cetra CB-20104 to CB-10121). \$55.62.

During the war years, rumor often reached us here in America, to the effect that this or that opera had been completely recorded in Europe with this great cast or that famous star. The first of these rumors has now materialized as the complete recording of Verdi's *La Forza del Destino* makes its way to our shores.

La Forza del Destino is a grandiose and many-faceted score from Verdi's so-called middle period. It was first performed at St. Petersburg, Russia, on November 11, 1862. The opera is sparkling with beautifully fashioned melodies, with opportunities for great singers, in spite of a far-fetched plot and a creaky libretto. Murders, duels, fratricide, misunderstandings, the heroine first disguised as a boy, then in monk's trappings; *ra-ta-plan* choruses of soldiers and *vivandieres*, processions of friars carrying lighted tapers—all go to make up a kaleidoscopic pageant of events which add up to a story which is totally absurd.

The music, however, is an altogether different matter. *Forza del Destino* is easily one of Verdi's most idiomatic scores, at its best of great beauty; a score which offers a stiff challenge, for its music demands a cast of exceptionally endowed singers, such a cast as first sang it at the Metropolitan in 1918, for instance.

Cetra (an Italian recording company) has met these demands superbly. It has gathered together the best group of singers that exist in Italy today, under the distinguished baton of Gino Marinuzzi, one of the great living conductors of Italian opera. Among the singers, Maria Caniglia, Galliano Masini, Carlo Tagliabue and Tancredi Pasero are all well known to American audiences, having all sung at the Metropolitan. Ebe Stignani has not been heard in New York, but she has long been looked upon as the world's greatest mezzo-soprano by those who have heard her in the opera houses in Italy, or who were fortunate to be present at her triumphs with the San Francisco Opera a few seasons ago.

Maria Caniglia, Italy's foremost dramatic soprano of the day, has been selected for the demanding role

of Donna Leonora di Vargas. She responds with a magnificent performance. Nowhere else on records does Mme. Caniglia sound so firmly poised, so vocally impressive as she does here. As we listened to her superb singing, we realized that she has come a long way since her days as a young soprano with the Metropolitan. The exacting Convent Scene with its *Madre pietosa Vergine* and *La Vergine degl' Angeli* is really something to listen to, while the *Pace, mio Dio* is an exquisite example of *legato*. The singer can also administer a thrill when she so desires, as demonstrated by her *Temerari del Ciel l'ira fuggite!* of the last act. This is glorious dramatic singing.

Ebe Stignani, as the gypsy, Preziosilla, sings her two scenes brilliantly, quite dominating the choral ensembles. Here you will find verve, style, technique and a wonderful voice which encompasses a high B natural without flinching.

Galliano Masini is the Don Alvaro of the album. His tenor is hard and dry, and his singing lacks charm. He is also guilty of occasional tasteless sobs. On the credit side of Mr. Masini's performance, we must cite the clarion upper notes, whose trumpet-like quality is very effective in the aria, *O tu che in seno agl'angeli* and the heroic Cloister Scene. The famous duet, *Solenne in quest'ora* (phonographically immortalized just 40 years ago by Caruso and Scotti), shows Masini's weakness as a singer of *legato* phrases, his lack of sensuously beautiful tone.

Far finer is the Don Carlos di Vargas of Carlo Tagliabue—in every way a first class performance. This singer has a lovely type of Italian baritone, molded in the great tradition. The timbre recalls Giuseppe De Luca's when he first came to this country. Mr. Tagliabue lends distinction to every scene he appears in. So does the rich and sonorous bass of Tancredi Pasero in the beautiful music allotted the Parde Guardiano (Father Superior)—a role he sang at the Metropolitan. Saturno Meletti as Fra Melitone (the opera's comic-relief), and Ernesto Dominici, as the Marchese di Calatrava, complete a great cast.

After you have played these surfaces four to six times over, you will find the reproduction excellent. It seems to require this amount of playing to clean out the grooves and get rid of a fuzzy quality which is bothersome during an initial hearing. The reproduction of soloists, orchestra, chorus and organ is first-class and most lifelike. Whoever acquires this recording is insured a great performance of one of Verdi's most interesting scores.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Puccini: Highlights from Madame Butterfly. (Sung in Italian). Licia Albanese (soprano), Lucielle Browning (mezzo-soprano), James Melton (tenor), with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1068. \$3.85.

Selections from Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, an

opera which seems more popular than ever, are indeed welcome. All the more so, when they enlist that most charming of singers, Licia Albanese. Miss Albanese has set a standard for Cio-Cio-San today, ever since she first assumed the role at her debut with the Metropolitan on February 9, 1940. She was pronounced, on that occasion, to be the most convincing Butterfly since the reign of Geraldine Farrar. Victor has therefore very properly featured the little Italian soprano in this album, which also affords glimpses of James Melton's B. F. Pinkerton and Lucielle Browning's Suzuki.

The selections consist of a great part of the ecstatic *Love Duet* which concludes Act I, and from Act II the ever popular *Un bel di vedremo*, the scene where Pinkerton's ship is sighted, the ensuing *Duet of the Flowers*, and a bit of the music preparatory to the Vigil. From Act III we have Pinkerton's *Addio fiorito asil*. Some of this music is rather curiously treated. The selection on side six is really a duet, yet the measures sung by the American consul, Sharpless, are here played by the orchestra. Could not a baritone have been procured? (The Metropolitan's indefatigable George Cehanovsky, perhaps?) The impression derived is of simply showing off Mr. Melton's voice rather than presenting a scene in the way Puccini has written it. The introductory phrases to *Un bel di* are also played by the orchestra, thus lessening the sense of performance, which one cannot help feeling is the objective in an album of operatic selections.

Frieder Weissmann is in charge of the beautifully recorded orchestra. His reading of the score stresses the poetic and sentimental character of the music rather than its possible excitement or ecstasy. For this reason the climax of the *Love Duet* sounds a little tame. Nor do the singers hold up too well at this juncture. Miss Albanese's high C is weak and she fails to sustain it until the orchestral phrase beneath it is properly resolved. At this point Mr. Melton, short on top notes, doesn't dare to brave the high C, and sings the alternate and lower passage, ending a good five beats after Miss Albanese has stopped. The ideal, of course, is for both singers to sustain a fortissimo C in unison and to come off together as the chord resolves. A recording of this passage made by Aureliano Pertile and Margaret Sheridan several years ago was the most ecstatic ever put on wax and its climax was an illustration of what we are driving at.

Miss Albanese sings *Un bel di* beautifully, also of exquisite refinement and personal sentiment is her account of the ensuing score. Mr. Weissmann misses the searing excitement in the climax of the *Trionfa il mio amor* passage, which invariably brings the house down in the theater, but his handling of the more intimate phrases and the lovely *Duet of the Flowers* is fine-grained in its care for orchestral nuance and color.

Mr. Melton's voice has never before been so honestly recorded. Here are no amplification tricks. The tenor sounds well, singing with warmth and romantic feeling. The high notes are a little tentative, but it is an attractive performance, nevertheless. Miss Browning's voice records well. Her portion of the *Duet of the Flowers* is quite lovely, and one only regrets the final top tone where both she and Miss Albanese are slightly below pitch.

The recording is a very beautiful one as far as actual sound is concerned. The balance is a model of sensitivity, and there is no distortion anywhere. Surfaces are smooth as glass.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Bizet: Carmen—excerpts. (Sung in French). Gladys Swarthout (mezzo-soprano), Licia Albanese (soprano), Robert Merrill (baritone), Ramon Vinay (tenor), with RCA Victor Chorale and Orchestra, conducted by Erich Leinsdorf (Robert Shaw, choral director). 6-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1078. \$7.

Victor's abridged version of Bizet's *Carmen* gives far more a sense of actual performance than did Columbia's, released last April. That album was a mere succession of unrelated arias, while here, scattered over 12 surfaces, we have connecting bits of "atmosphere," and measures from Bizet's masterpiece, which were badly in need of recording. Last April we bewailed the fact that neither company had seen fit to produce a complete *Carmen*—which is greatly needed—and here we will re-echo our sentiments, but perhaps more faintly.

Just as Columbia featured Rise Stevens in its album, so does Victor star Gladys Swarthout. Miss Swarthout has been a popular Carmen for some years now. Her interpretation, according to what we read in the elaborate notes that introduce the album, is highly unconventional and distinctive. We have never felt this about Miss Swarthout's Carmen. It is rather the painstaking and well organized culmination of the ambition of a lifetime by a nice, hard-working conscientious young woman. When Patti essayed Carmen (a role which did not suit her) one critic wrote that while Carmen was a cat, Patti made her a kitten. These sentiments might apply to Miss Swarthout's Carmen, especially in the *Habanera*, *Seguidilla*, and *Gypsy Song*. There is little sense of fascination, none of danger. These two elements are indispensable for a true realization of the role. Miss Swarthout's *Card Song* is well sung, but the fatalistic note is surely missing. However, the singer comes to life in the final scene of the opera. Here she seems to fully awake to the drama in Bizet's score and she really makes one visualize the predicament of Carmen as she rages up and down the *Plaza de Toros*. It is a long wait, nevertheless, for up to this point Miss Swarthout has suggested little. Her singing as al-

ways, is technically admirable. The voice is a very good one, and it is expertly and efficiently used. The color is also quite individual and lends itself to the part easily. One only wishes that Miss Swarthout could characterize her gypsy more sharply.

The popular mezzo has been given excellent support: Ramon Vinay, the possessor of an unusually dark, rich and expressive voice, is an excellent Don Jose (far better than Mr. Jobin of the Columbia set); for *Micaela's Aria*, Victor has called on the lovely tones of Licia Albanese's voice. Miss Albanese seems to drive her high notes unnecessarily, but this is, nevertheless, a star Micaela, with a blending of intensity and delicacy and a securely placed voice, which make this moment an outstanding one. Robert Merrill is the rather lugubrious Escamillo and lacks the *chic* and diction for this music. In minor parts we find Thelma Votipka, Lucielle Browning, Anthony Amato and George Cehanovsky.

The Robert Shaw RCA Victor Chorale sings rather neatly, but tamely, and its climaxes are weak. However, it comes across quite brilliantly in the final scene. The orchestra under Erich Leinsdorf is efficient.

Recording is honest; surfaces vary.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Verdi: Otello—Salce, salce (Act IV). One side, and **Verdi: Otello**—Ave Maria (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Frances Alda (soprano) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1000). \$3.50.

Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro—Voi che sapete (Act II). One side, and **Thomas: Mignon**—Io son Titania (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Luisa Tetrazzini (soprano) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1001). \$3.50.

Gounod: Faust—Dio possenti (Act II). One side, and **Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera**—Eri tu, che macchiavi (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Mario Ancona (baritone) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1002). \$3.50.

Meyerbeer: Les Huguenots—Piff, Paff (Act I). One side, and **Gounod: Philémon et Baucis**—Au bruit des lourds marteaux. (Sung in French). Marcel Journet (bass) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1003). \$3.50.

Halévy: La Juive—Rachel; quand du Seigneur (Act IV). One side, and **Massenet: Manon**—Je suis seul enfin?—Recit. and Ah! Fuyez, douce image—Air. (Sung in French). Enrico Caruso (tenor) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-15-1004). \$3.50.

Influenced by expanding activity among collectors of historical records, RCA Victor has at last realized what a treasure it contains within its own walls, and so, this month, it issues five double-faced records on red unbreakable Vinylite at \$3.50 apiece, to be known as *The Red Seal De Luxe Heritage Series*.

When electrical reproduction revolutionized recording, people got rid of their acoustically made

records as though their value had ceased. It was quite normal to hear one's friends exclaim, "I had a lot of old Caruso records, but I threw them away last spring." Then came the reaction and the realization that acoustical records of fabulously endowed singers, despite thin orchestration and noisy surfaces, were of the greatest historical and educational importance. It has taken Victor a long time to realize just what the Red Seal celebrity series it built up between 1906 and 1920 means to the vocal world.

In these newly presented records, surface-noise has been greatly reduced, and the Vinylite seems to give, even the orchestration, an added depth and range. Victor's choice for an opening salute in this new experiment is excellent: Ladies first! We have Frances Alda's smooth, lyric soprano in the *Salce, salce* and *Ave Maria* from Verdi's *Otello*. This is of interest because Mme. Alda was the Desdemona of the 1909 revival at the Metropolitan with Slezak and Scotti as Otello and Iago. Mme. Alda, a Marchesi pupil, had a voice of exquisite quality and she sang these arias most beautifully.

Luisa Tetrazzini (1871-1940), one of the most sensational of all coloraturas, is presented in the *Polonaise* from *Mignon* and the *Voi che sapete* from *Le Nozze di Figaro*. The diva's trills, descending chromatic scales, and brilliant climax notes, could not be duplicated by any singer alive today. Her Mozart singing offers contrast and comes as a surprise from one who was chiefly famous for vocal fireworks. It is a limpid piece of legato singing.

It was only natural to suppose that Enrico Caruso (1873-1921) would be among the first chosen to launch the new series. We here find his 1911 recordings of *Ah, fuyez Douce Image* from *Manon* and his 1920 record from *La Juive*, made less than a year before his tragic death. It is superfluous to dwell on the glories of what was probably the greatest tenor voice the world has known.

In concluding we have two deep voices—those of Mario Ancona (1860-1931) and Marcel Journet (1869-1933). Mr. Ancona is heard in *Eri tu* from *Ballo in Maschera* and the *Dio Possente* from *Faust*, which show him to be an indifferent musician, but the possessor of one of the roundest baritone voices of his period. Journet sings *Piff! Paff!* from *Les Huguenots* and the *Couplets de Vulcan* from Gounod's *Philemon et Baucis*. This basso had a brilliant and sonorous voice. He was associated with the de Reszkes, Melba, Nordica, Plancon, and other singers of what is now nostalgically referred to as the *Golden Age of Song*.

If \$3.50 seems excessive for these beautifully presented records, just remember that people in the old days, gladly paid \$3 a side (or \$6) for these treasureable moments from an era of great singing, alas, now vanished.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

CHORAL



Christmas Hymns and Carols. Robert Shaw and his RCA Victor Chorale. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1077. \$4.85.

V-11-9313. *Joy to the World* and *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* and *Angels We Have Heard on High*. One side, and *O Come, O Come, Emanuel* and *O Little Town of Bethlehem* and *Silent Night*.

V-11-9314. *O Come, All Ye Faithful* and *Luther's Cradle Hymn* and *God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen*. One side, and *We Three Kings* and *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing* and *The First Nowell*.

V-11-9315. *Shepherd's Carol* and *Coventry Carol* and *Patapan*. One side and *My Dancing Day* and *I Wonder as I Wander* and *Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella*.

V-11-9316. *Carol of the Bells* and *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* and *Go Tell It on the Mountain*. One side, and *I Sing of a Maiden* and *Echo Hymn* and *Wassail Song* and *Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly*.

Entirely worthy of the Red Seal label, and indeed a bargain at this price, is the outstanding work of Robert Shaw in this album of Christmas music. From his work around New York City during the past several years, Shaw appears to be the country's leading choral conductor, and certainly the most versatile.

The listing above of the contents of this album shows it to be divided into two groups. The first two records contain the hymns of the collection, and the last two records contain the carols. We prefer to think of *Angels We Have Heard on High*, *Silent Night*, *The First Nowell*, *God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen*, and *Away in a Manger* as carols and not hymns. However, that is a small matter in this case. The carols used here are strictly carols, some of a secular nature. All twenty-five selections are excellent examples of Christmas music, and every one is sung expertly.

Of especial importance are the arrangements used. They are not ornate, dressy, fussy arrangements in any case. Most of the hymns are sung as regular hymns—straight, but with surpassing style, finish, and intelligence. The phrasing is a lesson for choirmasters, although the tempo, in many cases, would be a bit rapid for congregational singing. The balance of the choir, and their responsiveness, is virtually perfect. The entire album is a *capella*, which happily precludes obtrusive accompaniments. How anyone can prefer some of the "popular" albums of Christmas music, with crooners distorting the music, flowery orchestral backgrounds, and all the sugary trappings, to an album such as this, is completely beyond us.

The reproduction is generally good, although it lacks one essential thing—resonance. Just a shade of

resonance, as one would imagine it in a church or hall, would have added greatly to the atmosphere of this set. It is possible though, that every degree of resonance introduced might have dulled the immaculate clarity and precision of this remarkable choir; so we are pleased to take it as it is. S.

Brahms: Liebeslieder—Walzer, Op. 52. (Sung in German). RCA Victor Chorale, Pierre Luboshutz and Genia Nemenoff (pianos), conducted by Robert Shaw. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1076. \$3.85.

Brahms' original scoring for the *Liebeslieder-Walzer* was for piano duet, with quartet for solo voices *ad libitum* (although no one has ever successfully interpreted the *ad libitum* in this case). It is generally conceded, as it is obvious, that the four voices and the two piano parts all have equal share in the loveliness of the *Liebeslieder-Walzer*, for in some of the more popular numbers, the voices have the most ravishing melodies.

Niemann describes the *Liebeslieder-Walzer* by saying they "are filled with an atmosphere of unclouded brightness and happiness, of a peculiarly soft Viennese and voluptuous cast. In them the joy and rapture of love predominates almost exclusively. Only occasionally is a deeper, graver note sounded. . . ." And in more direct wording will we add that one would have to be tone deaf not to be stirred by the irresistible melodies and compelling rhythms of these eighteen little gems which make up the Op. 52 Waltzes of daddy Brahms.

The finest performance we ever heard of this music was by a quartet with orchestra; it is usually presented at orchestral concerts with a chorus and orchestra. Musicraft recorded it some years ago with quartet and pianos (Album No. 14), as it was scored. The present version with chorus and two pianos is not entirely satisfactory, even if one accepts the chorus in place of a solo quartet. Its chief deficiency seems to be Robert Shaw's frequent lack of lilt and resiliency in style. Waltz No. 6, *A Pretty Little Bird Went Flying to the Garden*, for example, is too heavy and unbending for the piquant and graceful number that it is.

The chorus sings admirably, for it is a well-trained and highly efficient instrument. Luboshutz and Nemenoff, one of the outstanding duo-pianists team of the day, play well indeed, except for the restrictions of the unyielding conductor. The reproduction is well balanced, of the unresonant studio type, but not inappropriate for a work of chamber proportions. Being sung in the original, German, is unquestionably "right"; however, we prefer such matters as this in English.

Summarily, it is a recording that has merits, and in owning it, one will not get a distorted picture of this lovely music, although as noted above, we personally prefer a little more *gemutlichkeit*.

S.

Best Loved Christmas Music. Ray Bloch and his choir and orchestra. 3-10" discs in album. Signature Set S-3. \$3.

A small choir sings these familiar carols with reasonable skill. The feature of this album is that it contains twelve of the most popular Christmas pieces on these three 10-inch discs. Of course, in some cases there are only snatches of them. We should say that this album contains quantity rather than quality.

The selections are: *Here we Come A-Caroling; The First Noel; God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen; Joy to the World; Good King Wenceslas; Angels We Have Heard on High; Deck the Hall; Away in a Manger; Hark! The Herald Angels Sing; Silent Night; Adeste Fideles; and Cantique de Noël.*

VOCAL



Olden Ballads. Tom Glazer, accompanying himself on the guitar. 3-10" discs in album. Keynote Set K-131. \$3.

Most of the ballads in this album are new to us. They probably will not be to those persons who have made a study of old English and American folk songs. However, as many of them have not been recorded before, this collection has an unusual value. Tom Glaser, who is well-known to most radio listeners, has done considerable research in the field of the folk ballad and chosen these interesting and unusual selections for his first Keynote album. He has a pleasing voice and his fine diction makes every word of these songs easily understood. One does not have to follow him with the text in order to catch the stories that these ballads tell. His guitar accompaniments are skillfully played and are most appropriate.

If you are interested in "olden ballads," you should not miss the opportunity of investigating this unusual album.

The following ballads are contained in this album: *The Sheeling Song; Twelve Days of Christmas; Green Sleeves; Waly Waly; Hush Little Baby; Sixteen Come Sunday; Black Eyed Susie; Go Way From My Window; Uncle Reuben; and Blow the Candles Out.*

Brahms: Cradle Song, Op. 49, No. 4. One side, and **Fraser-Simpson: Vespers** (from "When We Were Very Young"). Helen Traubel (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Charles O'Connell. 1-12" disc (C-71872D). \$1.

For those who would like to have a record sung in English by the distinguished Wagnerian soprano, Helen Traubel, the present disc is highly recommended. We are very glad to note that Miss Traubel chose two selections that are worthy of her attention; she didn't go to the night club repertory, as so many of her colleagues at the Metropolitan have done, for pieces that are not in the operatic category. A fine

recording of Brahms' *Wiegenlied* in English is very welcome and *Vespers* is a delightful little selection that is fast becoming a children's classic. Both are beautifully sung and well recorded.

Christmastime. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-488. \$3.75.

Silent Night. One side, and **Adeste Fidelis.** Deanna Durbin (soprano) with Charles Previn and his orchestra, male octet and organ. (D-23657).

The Birthday of a King. One side, and **The Star of the East.** Judy Garland (soprano) with orchestra conducted by David Rose. (D-23658).

O, Little Town of Bethlehem. One side, and **It Came Upon the Midnight Clear.** Kenny Baker (tenor) with organ accompaniment by Eddie Dunstetter. (D-23671).

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing. One side, and **O Holy Night.** Kenny Baker (tenor) with organ accompaniment by Eddie Dunstetter. (D-23672).

If you would like to have well-known Christmas hymns sung by Deanna Durbin, Judy Garland and Kenny Baker, here they are all in one little album. The selections are all universally beloved and the singers enjoy the widest popularity but the combination—well, we have been wrong before, perhaps the public will go for this album, but if they do, we'll admit that we guessed wrong again.

ORGAN



Dupré: Variations on a Noël. E. Power Biggs (organ). 1-12" disc (V-11-9329). \$1.

While the label, for some unexplainable reason, does not state the organ used, it sounds like the organ in Memorial Church, Harvard. It is well recorded, with some thrilling passages. Biggs plays the music with style and ample contrasts. The music itself is typical of Dupré's writings, sure craftsmanship and not scaled to popular appeal. For ear tickling tunes, this disc in no way compares to the Daquin *Noëls* released several years ago (Vic. M-616); but it is a most worthy addition to the meagre catalog of organ music available today.

PIANO



Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2. Alexander Brailowsky (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-9330). \$1.

It has been some time since we have had a new recording of Liszt's popular *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2* and so a modern version was in order. Brailowsky gives a performance that is the essence of showmanship. He labors the first section and thus the finale seems even more brilliant than it is—and goodness knows it is brilliant enough. We were more amused

with his performance than we were thrilled by it. However, that is only one man's reaction, and certainly no one could play this difficult piece with greater virtuosity than Brailowsky does on the present disc. The piano reproduction is superb.

Milhaud: Le Bal Martiniquais. Robert and Gaby Casadesus (pianos). 1-12" disc (C-71831D). \$1.

This little suite of two short movements is just what one would expect it to be from its title—a lively little work with the tang of the Caribbean. Mr. and Mrs. Casadesus seem to be having great fun in playing it and dash it off in just the proper spirit. The piano reproduction is highly satisfactory.

CHILDREN



Humperdinck: Hansel and Gretel. Basil Rathbone (narrator), with Jane Powell (soprano), Ted Donaldson, supporting cast and orchestra conducted by Carmen Dragon. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-632. \$4.85.

This is a very attractive set. Furthermore it is executed in excellent taste, a quality which is extraordinarily desirable in a work of this kind. The story is set forth with marvellous simplicity and clearness. Children should love it and get to know the tunes of *Hansel and Gretel* as well as the story they already probably know. But this is not merely for children. Grown-ups cannot only enjoy but also profit by familiarizing themselves with a score which in the end is one of great sophistication and symphonic power.

Basil Rathbone is the narrator. His is an unexaggerated type of English voice, and its diction is admirable. He explains the story simply and points out the various themes which are played by Carmen Dragon's excellent orchestra. Some of this music is sung. We have Gretel's little dance-song, the lovely *Prayer Duet* and the final chorus presented the way in which they are in the opera. Jane Powell sings the music of Gretel attractively, while Ted Donaldson, who is the appealing Hansel, gives way to Rece Saxon in the singing portions. Mr. Rathbone is himself heard as the Witch. It is hard to recognize the suave tones of the familiar voice in this remarkable characterization—a *tour de force*!

The *Dream-Pantomime* is beautifully played by the orchestra. At the end—on side 8 of the album—Mr. Rathbone repeats the principal themes, one by one, so that there may be no slip-up in anyone's mind. Recording and surfaces are A-1. D.

Little Black Sambo. Don Lyon (narrator) with orchestra conducted by Regus Patoff. 2-10" discs in folder. Columbia Set J-28. \$1.25.

Columbia's version of "Little Black Sambo," as told by Don Lyon with original music by Leonard Gregg, makes a little gift that most any little boy or girl would be glad to find in his or her Christmas stocking. It has been splendidly recorded.

MISCELLANEOUS



O Come, All Ye Faithful and Hark, the Herald Angels Sing. One side, and **Angels from the Realms of Glory and O Little Town of Bethlehem.** 1-10" disc (Major 5064). \$2.

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen and The Citizens of Chatres. One side, and **The First Nowell and A Joyous Christmas Song.** 1-10" disc (Major 5065). \$2.

Silent Night and Joy to the World. One side, and **Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light and Away in a Manger.** 1-10" disc (Major 5066). \$2.

We Three Kings of Orient Are and At Solemn Midnight and Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming. One side, and **Deck the Hall and We Christians May Rejoice Today and Come All Ye Shepherds.** 1-10" disc (Major 5067). \$2.

Bring a Torch Jeannette, Isabella and Good Christian Men Rejoice. One side, and **O Holy Night and Come Ye Lofty.** 1-10" disc (Major 5068). \$2.

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear and Shepherd's Christmas Song and I Saw Three Ships a-Sailing. One side, and **Gloria in excelsis deo and The Boar's Head Carol and Sleep Little Dove.** 1-10" disc (Major 5069). \$2.

All the above records played by Charles R. Cronham on chimes, Marble Church, New York City.

For years there has been an insistent demand for new records of chimes. There are but a few in the present catalogs and they are none too good. Therefore, this list of recordings made by Major, the company which produced such an outstanding catalog of sound effect records, is of more than passing interest. These recordings were made of the famous chimes of the Marble Church, New York City, played by the distinguished organist, Charles R. Cronham. These records contain recordings of the chimes only; there are no organ accompaniments. They are particularly suited for churches and memorial parks who have sound systems for playing them from their towers.

Merry Christmas—Instrumental Carols. Arno Levitch (violin) and Don Baker (organ). 3-10" discs in album. Continental Set No. 39. \$3.

There are very few purely instrumental recordings of Christmas carols and so this new Continental album is particularly interesting. Continental struck upon the idea of having these well-known carols played by an able violinist and organist. It is a grand idea and the results are most pleasing. These recordings are highly attractive in themselves or they may be used to accompany those who feel urged to sing these age-old melodies. All the popular carols are included in this collection. You will find *Silent Night*; *Joy to the World*; *Oh, Little Town of Bethlehem*; *Adeste Fideles*; *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*, and many others. They have all been nicely recorded.

Christmas Gift Suggestions

ORCHESTRA



Beethoven: Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 36. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-597. \$4.85.

Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique, Op. 14. San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 6-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-994. \$6.85.

Brahms: Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68. Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 5-12" discs in album. Victor Set V-4. \$10.85 (Vinylite).

Brahms: Symphony No. 3 in F, Op. 90. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1007. \$4.85.

Chopiniana. (Compositions of Chopin arranged by Dimitri Rogal-Lewitzky). Robin Hood Dell Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-598. \$3.85.

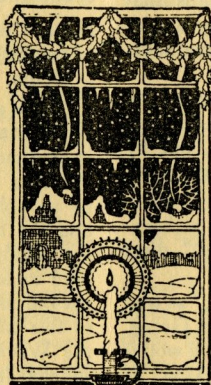
Dvorák: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World"). The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-570. \$5.85.

Enesco: Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1 in A major, Op. 11. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Two sides, and **Enesco: Roumanian Rhapsody No. 2 in D major, Op. 11.** National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Kindler. 2-12" discs (V-18201 and V-18202) in album. Victor Set M-830. \$2.85.

Grofé: Grand Canyon Suite. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1038. \$4.85.

Music of Fritz Kreisler. Andre Kostelanetz and his orchestra. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-614. \$3.85.

Mahler: Symphony No. 4 in G major. Philharmonic-Symphony of New York conducted by Bruno Walter with Desi Halban (soprano). 6-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-589. \$6.85.



Massenet: Le Cid—Ballet Suite. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 3-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-1058. \$3.

Ravel: Rapsodie Espagnole. Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 2-12" discs (C-11952D and C-11953D) in album. Columbia Set X-234. \$2.85.

Schubert: Symphony No. 6 in C. Seven sides, and **Mozart: Eine kleine Nachtmusik—Rondo.** London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1014. \$4.85.

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 6, Op. 53. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 5-12" discs (V-18391 to V-18395S) in album. Victor Set M-867. \$5.35.

Stravinsky: The Song of the Nightingale. Five sides, and **Chabrier: Joyous March.** Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1041. \$3.85.

Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-627. \$3.85.

Music of Tchaikovsky. The Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia conducted by Andre Kostelanetz. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-601. \$3.85.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto in D major, Op. 61. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 5-12" discs (V-17441 to V-17445S) in album. Victor Set M-705. \$5.35.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor, Op. 23. Vladimir Horowitz (piano) with the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-12" discs (V-18145 to V-18148) in album. Victor Set M-800. \$4.85.

Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18. Artur Rubinstein (piano) with the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Goldschmann. Nine sides, and **Chopin: Impromptu No. 3 in G flat, Op. 51.** Artur Rubinstein (piano). 5-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1075. \$5.85.

Christmas Gift Suggestions

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: Sonatas for Organ and Orchestra. E. Power Biggs (organ) and The Arthur Fiedler Sinfonietta, conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1019. \$3.85.

Schubert: Sonatina No. 1 in D major, Op. 137, No. 1. Three sides, and **Schubert—arr. Friedberg: Rondo** (From Piano Sonata in D major, Op. 53). Joseph Szigeti (violin) and Andor Földes (piano). 2-12" discs (C-71487D and C-71488D) in album. Columbia Set X-238. \$2.85.

Schumann: Quintet in E flat major, Op. 44. Rudolph Serkin (piano) and the Busch Quartet. 4-12" discs (V-71442D to C-71445D) in album. Columbia Set M-533. \$4.85.

Shostakovich: Quartet, Op. 49. Stuyvesant String Quartet. 2-12" discs (C-71435D and C-71436D) in album. Columbia Set X-231. \$2.85.

White: Sea Chanty. Edna Phillips (harp) with string ensemble under the direction of Eugene Ormandy. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-259. \$2.85.

OPERA



A Treasury of Grand Opera. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1074. \$4.85.

Mascagni: L'Amico Fritz—O Amore, o bella luce (Act III). One side, and **Verdi: I Lombardi—La mia letizia infondere.** Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) with E. I. A. R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tan-sini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25026). \$3.09.

Wagner: Lohengrin—Bridal Chamber Scene (Act III, Scene 2). (Sung in German). Helen Traubel (soprano) and Kurt Baum (tenor) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-261. \$2.85.

Wagner: Die Walküre—Duet, Act I, Scene 3. (Sung in German). Helen Traubel (soprano) and Emery Darcy (tenor) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-618. \$3.85.

Gilbert & Sullivan: Yeomen of the Guard. D'Oyly Carte Opera Company. 11-12" discs in album. Victor Set DC-17. \$11.85.

MISCELLANEOUS



Annie Get Your Gun. Ethel Merman and members of the original cast with chorus and orchestra conducted by Jay Blackton. 6-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-468. \$5.25.

Bach Organ Music. E. Power Biggs, playing the organ in Memorial Church, Harvard University. 4-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1048. \$4.85.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13 ("Pathétique"). Rudolph Serkin (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-648. \$3.85.

Horowitz Program. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1001. \$3.85.

Jerome Kern Selections (Memorial Album). Soloists, chorus and orchestra conducted by Robert Trendler. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set 106. \$4.50.

Sigmund Romberg Favorites, Vol. I. Genevieve Rowe (soprano), Lillian Cornell (mezzo-soprano), Eric Mattson (tenor), Lawrence Brooks (baritone) with Sigmund Romberg and his orchestra and Victor Chorus. 4-10" discs in album. Victor Set M-1051. \$3.75.

CHILDREN



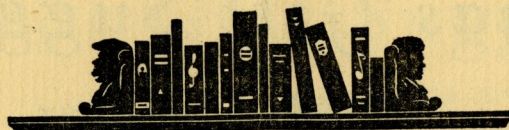
Dickens: A Christmas Carol. Adapted by Edith Meiser; directed by Tom McKnight. "Scrooge" played by Basil Rathbone. Incidental music composed and conducted by Leith Stevens. 3-12" discs (C-11880D to C-11882D) in album. Columbia Set M-521. \$3.85.

Schubert—His Story and His Music. Jose Ferrer (speaking) with Eugene Morgan (baritone) and Vox Symphony Orchestra conducted by Max Goberman. 3-10" discs in album. Vox Set No. 254. \$3.75.

Snow White—Selections. Lyn Murray and his Orchestra, Soloists, and Chorus. 4-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-368. \$3.75.

Tubby the Tuba. Victor Jory (narrator) with symphony orchestra conducted by Leon Barzin. 2-10" discs in album. Cosmo Set DMR-101. \$2.50.

The Whale Who Wanted to Sing at the Met. Nelson Eddy (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-640. \$3.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

Modern Music. By Max Graf. Translated by Beatrice R. Maier. 320 pp. Philosophical Library (New York). Price \$3.

A Treasury of Grand Opera. Edited by Henry W. Simon. v+403 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Shining Trumpets. By Rudi Blesh. xvi+365+xvii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

Letters of Composers. An Anthology 1603-1945. Compiled and edited by Gertrude Norman and Miriam Lubell Shrifte. xviii+422+xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

The Borzoi Book of Ballets. By Grace Robert. xvii+362+xxiii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.50.

Listening to the Orchestra. By Kitty Barne. 299 pp. Illustrated. The Bobbs-Merrill Company (Indianapolis). Price \$2.75.

Handel—By Herbert Weinstock. xvi+326+xlili pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.00.

Talking Wax. By Leroy Hughbanks. 142 pp. The Hobson Book Press (New York). Price \$2.50.

Sergei Prokofiev: His Musical Life. By Israel V. Nestyev. Translated from the Russian by Rose Prokofieva. Introduction by Sergei Eisenstein. xxvii+193+xiv pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

Impresario. A memoir by S. Hurok in collaboration with Ruth Goode. 291 pp. Illustrated. Random House (New York). Price \$3.

Theme and Variations. An autobiography by Bruno Walter. Translated from the German by James A. Galston. Illustrated. xi+344+xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

The Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents. Edited by Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel. Illustrated. 431 pp. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$6.

Enrico Caruso: His Life and Death. By Dorothy Caruso. Illustrated. 303 pp. Simon and Schuster, Inc. (New York). Price \$2.75.

The Musical Scene. By Virgil Thomson. x+301+xv pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$3.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Aech, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Best, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargall, MU—Musiercraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Shirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

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50c. per year

The Record Book (Complete Edition. Reprint). By David Hall. xvii+1063 pp. The Citadel Press (New York). Price \$2.98.

A reprint of the famous David Hall book on records, containing the original book published in 1940 and the various supplements issued from time to time, has recently been published and is presently available at most record and book stores. It is a mammoth tome of over one thousand pages and is surely a great bargain at its present modest price. The listing and the evaluation of the various recordings are so extensive that it would seem to us that every serious collector of records would wish a copy.

Thousands of copies of the original book and the supplements have been sold and record collectors generally have been most enthusiastic about this comprehensive guide to recorded music. They found the records they were interested in quite easily by means of the very complete index, and they learned through experience that Mr. Hall's opinions were for the most part entirely sound. In every case they were unbiased and sincere. We have not always agreed with Mr. Hall, but we have never questioned his integrity. We feel that he has done an excellent job in a most painstaking manner and we do not hesitate to recommend *The Record Book* to those music lovers who are not familiar with it.

* * *

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

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ORCHESTRA



Stravinsky: Pétrouchka—Ballet. The London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 5-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-2. \$11.

Too bad they don't award "Oscars" for the best recordings of the year—this one should win it hands down. Everything about this album is perfect (with one possible exception to be mentioned later on). Ernest Ansermet is acknowledged as one of the greatest conductors of Stravinsky's music, and his reading of *Pétrouchka* is a masterpiece. As for the reproduction, it is *ne plus ultra*, and can be said to be the zenith of present day efforts in capturing the glories of an orchestra in shellac.

This set is an English Decca frr recording, which stand for "full frequency range recording," which indeed it is. The English Decca technique is quite as sensational as their claims. Although these recordings are imported and released by Decca in U. S. A., they are pressed in England, and the smooth surfaces are all we expect from that country. They are nearly as quiet as Vinylite, and are recorded with less surface noise than some Vinylites. The accompanying notes are printed in England; but the albums that house the records are made in this country, and are very colorful.

There is, most unfortunately, a drawback to these marvelous discs. Their diameter and their thickness are both less than our domestic records. The diameter of these English Decca records is exactly eleven and three-fourths inches, whereas our domestics measure eleven and seven-eighths inches. The difference of one-eighth of an inch makes it about impossible to operate them satisfactorily on an automatic drop changer of the push-off type. While these records are unusually strong and pliable, they also are thinner than our domestic discs. Their characteristic thinness therefore will cause trouble with most automatic drop changers of the blade type. At present, these sets are available only in automatic sequence; however, they are made manually, and it is possible Decca may

import manual sets at a later date.

This *Pétrouchka* is endorsed 100% for reading, reproduction, surface, quality of record, and everything imaginable, except for the irregular size noted above. S.

Mozart: Symphony No. 41 in C, K. 551 ("Jupiter").

Seven sides, and **Bach: Suite No. 3 in D—Air.**

NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1080. \$4.85.

Toscanini conducting the *Jupiter Symphony*! It is recordings such as this that make one realize the importance of recorded art to future generations. For what could the *maestro* have done more fitting than to have left for posterity his interpretation of this towering masterpiece?

With this in mind, we played the album through with the greatest interest and (we confess) some trepidation, for fear that perhaps, through some fluke or other, the recording might not live up to what we hoped. Our fears were soon allayed. This set is an example of the most transparent and distinguished playing you are ever apt to hear, as well as a model of just and beautiful recording. Even the surfaces—those temperamental surfaces—behave themselves beautifully, as though realizing the importance of their responsibility.

Certainly, nothing new can be said about this wonderful symphony, with its superb final movement. And yet, when we played the records through for the first time, there was an attendant sense of fresh discovery and of nuances not heard before. This is, as everyone knows, one of Toscanini's greatest qualities—this ability to recreate.

The *maestro's tempi* are those of a supreme authority. There is no unnecessary acceleration, no rushing such as this great musician has sometimes indulged in in late years. Everything is just about perfection.

On the last record-surface we find an equally beautiful performance of Bach's *Air from Suite No. 3 in D (The Air for G String)*. It is with pleasure and a sense of privilege that we recommend this altogether outstanding album.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 4 in B flat, Op. 60.

London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1081. \$4.85.

Beethoven's *Symphony No. 4* seems signally congenial to the temperament and particular talents of Sir Thomas Beecham. The *Fourth* is the least frequently performed of all the Titan's symphonies and so we welcome this thoroughly attractive, idiomatic performance which has received such a well-balanced and honest reproduction on these surfaces.

Sir Thomas and the London Philharmonic immediately realize the mood of the opening *adagio*

passage of the first movement. It is searching and mysterious with its slow, descending figure over a B-flat pedal point. The sudden change to a brilliant *allegro* is sheer magic under the beat of the great British conductor. The slow or second movement is also particularly suited to Sir Thomas' care for detail and delicacy of nuance. This is indeed one of Beethoven's loveliest creations and it is more than just a felicitous matter to have it as beautifully realized as it is here.

The *Fourth* has been previously recorded by Toscanini, Weingartner and Ormandy. Weingartner's is interesting though by now a dated recording, while Ormandy associated with the Minneapolis Symphony is not a set to stir one's enthusiasm. Toscanini and the NBC Symphony, however, are another matter. The *maestro* offers serious competition to Sir Thomas, and a choice will remain a purely personal matter. We confess to quite a hankering after this present set, and we would add that no one will go wrong whose choice alights upon it.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Mozart: Symphony No. 26 in E flat, K. 184.

Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 1-12" disc (V-11-9363). \$1.

The repertoire of recorded music is greatly enriched by this superb recording by the Boston Symphony under the distinguished direction of Serge Koussevitzky. One of Mozart's shortest symphonies, yet a real little masterpiece, it fits nicely on two sides of this single disc. It is in three movements—a lovely and interesting first movement in the concerto form of the time, followed by a charming andante and a thrilling finale. Here is an unique single disc that anyone may add to his library with profit.

Prokofiev: Symphony No. 5, Op. 100.

Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-661. \$5.85.

Serge Prokofiev's *Symphony No. 5* was written and orchestrated in a brief two months' session during the summer of 1944. Themes that had collected in the composer's head for several years and had been jotted down for future use in a notebook, are said to have given impetus to the writing of this symphony. Prokofiev insists that there is no program to his music, nevertheless he himself has entitled it "a symphony about the spirit of man."

The symphony is constructed in the conventional four movements. After the first and second playings it struck us that the work was reactionary rather than radical, and while it has several striking and arresting passages, as a whole it evinces little character or individuality. The work belongs without question to the romantic school of symphonic music and can no more be called "modern" than the symphonies of Sibelius.

The *Fifth Symphony* seems to lack the sardonic personality, the civilized and fine-grained fastidious-

ness which have always been the trademarks of this Russian composer, and which were so peculiarly his in earlier days. This music seems to stem from the more grandiose pages of Glière. The second movement, which is the most original of the four, is more than suggestive of Shostakovich.

Artur Rodzinski and the Philharmonic-Symphony of New York play the new symphony in masterly fashion, and both recording and surfaces are unusually satisfactory.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Brahms: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 73. San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1065. \$4.85.

Monteux has the distinction of getting this symphony on eight sides, by eliminating the repeat in the first movement and adopting a breezy tempo for the third movement, which fits on one side. Victor's previous set by Ormandy ran to twelve sides (M-694). All others have settled for ten sides. And of the ten-siders we have always felt Beecham (Col. M-265) had the most remarkable evaluation of the score. In addition, Beecham's set, recorded in England, was one of their first high-fidelity recordings, and to this day it is most satisfying reproduction.

The reproduction of the Monteux set is so full and spacious, that the echo tends to cloud many passages. From their period of dead studio recordings RCA is swinging to over-resonant recordings that often suffer from echo and blur. Of course, there is no denying the timbre of an orchestra gains in beauty and quality from resonance, so you will find the present set tonally lush; and RCA has achieved brilliance as well as balance.

As previously indicated, Monteux loses no time anywhere in his reading. We would not say that his tempi are too rapid, for Monteux can be depended upon for good taste. We are pleased to see him, one of the finest conductors in the country, departing from the French school of music. This set is certainly worth hearing if you are contemplating a new Brahms Second.

S.

Brahms: Symphony No. 3 in F, Op. 90. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-642. \$4.85.

To the recordings by Stock and Weingartner already in its catalog, Columbia now adds another version of the Brahms *Third Symphony* by Ormandy. It would be a very fair contribution were the reproduction on a parity with the interpretation. We cannot enthuse over the type of reproduction Columbia has achieved in this instance, although we have played it several times and on several different machines. We still find the string tone far too thin and distant, with none of the broad shimmering quality characteristic of a full symphony orchestra, especially the Philadelphia. The bass is very full, and for the over-

all effect, we find it too prominent. In general the set lacks clarity and balance, and presents the orchestra with an unnatural timbre.

Ormandy's reading of the score is typical of his work these days—middle of the road. It is not lifeless or shabby; but it is not brilliant, electric, or thrilling. It is a good solid performance that does justice to the score. It will wear well with repeated hearings. Nearly all of those who have heard the recent RCA Victor recording of the *Third* by Koussevitzky (M-1007) find it about the best all-around set. The reproduction is very fine, and the reading is very lively. Victor has also recently repressed the old—quite old—Stokowski set (M-42) (in fact, about eighteen years old). We believe he is the only one who plays the opening bars the way the score indicates: *allegro con brio*. Too bad the set is so ancient, for it and the Mengelberg versions had interesting musical values.

S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F major, Op. 68 ("Pastoral"). The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-631. \$5.85.

Our favorite recording of the *Pastoral* has always been the Bruno Walter-Vienna Philharmonic one which Victor brought out as Set G-20. Toscanini also gave a fine performance in a slightly better reproduction; but the Vienna Philharmonic was an orchestra rarely equalled and probably never surpassed. The *Pastoral* is one of Bruno Walter's most delightful interpretations, and it was wise of Columbia to have him record it again, as Victor G-20 is no longer available. It was also nice to give Walter the Philadelphia Orchestra, for they play it beautifully.

Not quite so beautiful are Columbia's engineer's efforts to record the work. The set is really quite good in most respects except for the string tone in the middle and upper registers. Here again we get that slight something that characterizes the tone as thin, hollow, nasal, sizzling, or whatever it is that takes the keen but smooth edge from the string tone as we like it, and imagine it sounds in person. The lower registers are good and resonant; and definition is generally clear. Surfaces on our set were good.

The charm of this symphony always remains as fresh and green as the countryside it depicts. Bruno Walter's reading of the work is one to enhance any record collection.

S.

Beethoven: Leonora Overture No. 2, Op. 72. The Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Edouard van Biem. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-4. \$5.

Thomas: Raymond—Overture. The National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 1-12" disc (D-K1299). \$2.

The *Leonora Overture No. 2*, here recorded, is the overture originally written for the opera *Fidelio*, and used in the first production in 1805. It is just slightly

less imposing than the favorite *Leonora* No. 3; and actually the No. 2 is more suitable as a prelude to the opera.

The performance by van Bienum, present director of the famous Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, is a highly dramatic and at times very deliberate one. The reproduction is English Decca frrr, as explained in the review of *Pétrouchka* (EDA-2). The quality of tone seems deeper and somewhat different, as this set was recorded in a different hall, namely the Assembly Hall, Walthamstow. Most frrr records have been recorded at Kingsway Hall, London.

The *Raymond Overture* is most welcome in a new recording. This frrr disc was recorded at Kingsway Hall, London, and has great definition and clarity—and power. *Raymond Overture* is really a charming old chestnut that might be heard oftener on occasions where lighter fare is in order. Boyd Neel turns in a deft reading which will please anyone interested in the work.

Again we call attention to the narrow diameter and thinness of these English records, as explained in the *Pétrouchka* review. With this exception, the records are triple A-1. S.

Magyar Gipsy Melodies. Alexander Haas and his Budapest Gipsy Ensemble with Maximilian as Primás. 3-10" discs in album. Keynote Set K-129. \$3.

There always seems to be a demand for new selections in the field of authentic Gypsy music and so the present album should enjoy wide popularity. We doubt if the English translations of the Hungarian titles will mean much to our readers, but most of the tunes were new to us and we believe that most of them are being recorded for the first time in America. Alexander Haas and his orchestra are well-known in both Europe and America and are considered among the leading ensembles in their particular field. If Gypsy music appeals to you, you'll probably like this collection very much. Reproduction—excellent.

Rimsky-Korsakov—arr. Goodman: *Hymn to the Sun*. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov**—arr. Goodman: *Gypsy Dance*. Al Goodman and his Orchestra, with The Guild Choristers. 1-12" disc (V-28-0412). 75¢.

For those who have seen the film "Song of Scheherazade," Al Goodman offers his arrangements of two of the most popular musical selections which were used in it. Nicely recorded.

Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue. Vladimir Sokoloff (piano) with Al Goodman and his Orchestra. One side, and **Gershwin: Porgy and Bess**—Summertime. Camilla Williams (soprano) with Al Goodman and his Orchestra and The Guild Choristers. 1-12" disc (V-46-0004). \$1.

A short version of *Rhapsody in Blue* and a very good one of *Summertime* for those who are not tired of these numbers. Well recorded.

Mozart: Minuets, K. 176. Vox Chamber Orchestra conducted by Edvard Fendler. 3-10" discs in album. Vox Set No. 166. \$3.75.

According to the notes which accompany this album, Fendler is credited with unearthing these *Minuets*. The story goes that Mozart was asked to write some dance music for the 1773 Christmas carnival of the people of Salzburg. He readily obliged with the dozen minuets we have here, some of which have trios. The twelve minuets are arranged on these discs in automatic sequence, and are carefully numbered, with the trios indicated, as well as the several continuations from side to side.

Vox is again to be congratulated for a worth while item heretofore unrecorded domestically (L'Oiseau Lyre, France, recorded Fendler doing these *Minuets* several years ago). Fendler is indeed a man to be respected and admired. The Vox Chamber Orchestra plays these little minuets with fine finish and style under Fendler, and they have been recorded very well. Even the surfaces of this set are better than Vox's usual low average.

In case anyone wonders whether it is not a bit boring and too much of the same thing to play through a dozen minuets at one time, we can only say it was one of the fastest fifteen minute periods we can recall. They just seem to skip along one after the other and are finished before you know it. It must be the genius of Mozart—whatever it is, the set is delightful. S.

Favorite Strauss Waltzes. Orchestra conducted by Karl Kritz. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set No. 112. \$4.75.

American Waltzes. Orchestra conducted by Joseph Littau. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set No. 121. \$4.75.

Two albums of very lovely dinner music nicely recorded on the quiet non-breakable Vinylite material. Both are recorded by small orchestras under capable direction. The Strauss waltzes are directed by Karl Kritz, a distinguished European conductor, who has recently conducted operatic performances in New York, Chicago, San Francisco and other American cities. Joseph Littau, who is responsible for the American Waltzes, has had wide experience in America as musical director of the Boston Opera Company and the Omaha Symphony. Many of us remember him as the brilliant director of the World's Fair Band in New York.

The Strauss album contains the following selections: *Blue Danube*; *Where the Citrons Bloom*; *A Thousand and One Nights*; *Treasure Waltz*; *Vienna Life*; *Vienna Bon Bons*; *Morning Journals*; and *Artist's Life*.

The American waltzes are: *Falling in Love With You*; *A Perfect Day*; *I Love You truly*; *I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now*; *For You*; *Remembering You*; *Memories* and *Your Eyes Have Told Me So*.

Liszt—trans. Karl Müller-Berghaus: **Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-12437D). \$1.

Numerous recordings have been made of the orchestral version of this ever-popular Liszt piano piece; but we doubt if any of them are more satisfactory than the new one by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the brilliant direction of Eugene Ormandy. If you care to add this selection to your library, you won't go wrong by choosing the present version. It is an excellent example of modern recording at its best.

Rendezvous. Morton Gould and his Orchestra. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-645. \$4.85.

This album consists of a group of Morton Gould's arrangements—some daring and all quite interesting. If you like Mr. Gould's arrangements of popular songs, you'll go for this album in a big way and if you don't, you'll pass it by.

The selections that Mr. Gould has chosen to dress-up in his particular style are: *Beyond the Blue Horizon*; *Night and Day*; *Shadow Waltz*; *Tea for Two*; *What Is This Thing Called Love*; *Through Your Eyes to Your Heart*; *Time On My Hands*; and *Stardust*.

Tiomkin: "Duel in the Sun" Music. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1083. \$4.

Many persons who saw *Duel in the Sun* on the screen felt that the musical background was just as enjoyable as the picture, and so the present album should have a ready-made market awaiting its release. Others will doubtless find this unusual music quite fascinating. It has been splendidly played by the famous Boston "Pops" under the brilliant direction of Arthur Fiedler.

A number of pages with scenes from the film in full color and the story of the plot are bound in this attractive album.

CONCERTO



Khachaturian: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra.

Moura Lympany (piano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 4-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-3. \$9.

At last the Khachaturian *Piano Concerto* is available—it has been sought after by many ever since its premiere. And these patient souls are being rewarded with a magnificent recording. This English Decca set is ffrf—full frequency range recording—at its best. The balance achieved between piano and orchestra and the color and quality of both beggar description. We will dispense with the high-powered adjectives and merely say we think it is perfect. The

way they get such a sonorous bass register and at the same time such a true and lifelike high string tone in tutti passages is indeed remarkable. For the one flaw in these records we refer again to the *Pétrouchka* review elsewhere in this bulletin.

The name of Khachaturian is too new for inclusion in most encyclopedias, dictionaries, and reference works; but the name is certain to be a household word in musical circles before long. In 1923, at the age of nineteen, he was impelled to take up a musical career, and later entered the Moscow State Conservatoire where he received his formal musical education. Khachaturian is an Armenian, and his music was prominently featured in the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Soviet State of Armenia in 1945.

The *Piano Concerto* is in three movements, which appear rather rhapsodic in form, the feature of this work being its melodic invention. Melody abounds, and a melody is not given any conventional development before another melody appears. The orchestral fabric is most engaging with colorful scoring. The piano part is finely written for keyboard, and has many passages of surpassing bravura and dash. The final flash of double octaves at the end of the first movement is thrilling. The slow movement is lyrical but broad and impassioned. The final movement is capricious, and has a towering climax.

Moura Lympany is well equipped technically to deliver a fine rendition of this interesting work, and beyond technique there is also a feeling for the work that "puts it over." The orchestral support is clean and sure and well directed by Fistoulari. And the reproduction—it's photographic in accuracy. Needless to say, the surfaces are A-1. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Grieg: Sonata in A minor, Op. 36. Raya Garbousova (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Concert Hall Society Set AD. \$6.85.

The aim of Concert Hall Society is to record and release adequate recordings of worthy music that is not to be found in the present catalogs of other manufacturers. If the standard set by the first releases, which are being issued this month, is maintained there is no question in our mind but that Concert Hall Society will play an important part in the development of the repertory of recorded music, and should win, with the help of the discerning music lover, a proper reward. In addition to the item listed above, the other two releases this month are: Beethoven: *Irish Songs* and Prokofieff: *Music for Children*. The former is reviewed under VOCAL and the latter under PIANO in the present issue of this bulletin.

It seems strange to us that Grieg's *Sonata in A minor* was not chosen by some violoncellist for recording long before Miss Garbousova selected it for

her first CHS album. It is certainly attractive, full of melody, and gives ample opportunity for the artist to display his or her virtuosity. In fact it rather resembles a concerto with the piano supplying the orchestral part in support of the solo 'cello. Miss Garbousova gives a superb performance with the highly artistic aid of the accomplished pianist, Artur Balsam.

The recording has been nicely accomplished on nonbreakable Vinylite.

Hebrew and Palestinian Folk Melodies. Palestine String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. Disc Set No. 902. \$4.50.

A number of Jewish melodies are given sympathetic performances by the very able Palestine String Quartet, which was founded by Isador Kleinman for the purpose of keeping this music alive for the benefit of the present generation. Mr. Kleiman is the violist of the quartet.

One does not have to be Jewish to appreciate the soul-stirring music contained in this unusual album. Most anyone, who really enjoys string quartet music, will find much to admire and cherish in these splendid recordings.

OPERA



Mozart Operatic Arias (Sung in Italian). Ezio Pinza (basso) with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set No. 643. \$4.85.

C-71842D. *Don Giovanni*—Madamina, il catalogo (Act I).

C-71843D. *Il Seraglio*—Ah! che voglio trionfare! One side, and *Die Zauberflöte*—Qui sdegno non s'accende (Act II).

C-71844D. *Mentre ti lascio, O figlia*, K. 513.

C-71845D. *Le Nozze di Figaro*—Se vuol ballare (Act I). One side, and *Le Nozze di Figaro*—Aprite un po' quegli' occhi (Act IV).

Columbia, very wisely taking advantage of the fact that its roster contains both Ezio Pinza and Bruno Walter, has produced this superb and authoritative album of Mozart arias.

Pinza is undoubtedly the greatest Mozart singer of his day. His appearances in *Don Giovanni*, *Nozze di Figaro* and the *Magic Flute* have provoked storms of approval from Metropolitan Opera audiences. As to Mr. Walter's qualities as an interpreter of Mozart's music, these are so celebrated that we can dispense with commenting on them here.

The arias contained within this album are all sung in Italian. We have Leporello's *Catalogue Aria*, from "Don Giovanni," which gives you a chance to hear Mr. Pinza in a role he does not sing in the theater, for he is always cast as the mercurial *Don*. The basso

sings with humor and lightness of tone. His diction is splendid and the fact that this is a far less bulky performance than one is used to, is all in its favor.

Osmin's aria from the *Seraglio* is welcome, for it has not been recorded before. It gives Mr. Pinza a chance to display some scale work as well as a fine low D. The concert aria, *Mentre ti lascio, o figlia*, written in Vienna in 1787, is also new to records. It seems like a pretty boring and repetitious piece.

Not so, however, the two sprightly arias from *Le Nozze di Figaro*. These arias show the singer to be the great Mozartian artist he is. *Se vuol ballare* is delivered with a properly biting irony, while the last act *Aprite un poco gl'occhi* is projected with whirlwind effect—always one of the singer's great moments at the Metropolitan.

The album makes one wonder anew at the perpetual youthfulness of Mr. Pinza's voice. Despite years which are not generally considered the prime of a singer's career, the basso betrays no sense of age, no unsteadiness of tone, no loss of freshness or sparkle. Eternal youth seems to be Mr. Pinza's secret!

Bruno Walter's accompaniments are transparent, elastic and right. The recording does justice to the superior art you will find upon these surfaces.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Verdi: La Traviata—Ah! fors' è lui and *Sempre libera* (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Licia Albanese (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann. 1-12" disc (V-119331). \$1.

This month, Licia Albanese has added to her fast growing list of records the *Ah, fors' è lui* and *Sempre Libera!* from Giuseppe Verdi's "La Traviata." This great scene, which pulls down the curtain at the close of the opera's first act, has been a test for many generations of sopranos, as it demands both lyric and coloratura singing.

The great mistresses of song, who adorned the 19th century, reveled in this double aria. Adelina Patti appeared in what was described as a cuirass of diamonds, to dazzle her adoring audiences in this scene, and the beauty and brilliance of her vocalization is said to have been no less scintillating. Marcella Sembrich and Nellie Melba also put their beautiful voices and consummate techniques at the service of Verdi's roulades and trills.

Miss Albanese is not in the tradition of these great singers in that she does not possess a coloratura technique. For this reason, the suave legato of *Ah, fors' è lui* suits her far better than the runs and rapid scale-passages of *Sempre libera!* Miss Albanese's is not a flexible voice by nature, and she cannot hide a sense of heaviness and difficulty in these florid passages.

However, this singer has at her disposal one of the loveliest lyric sopranos now before the public, and hers is also the gift of being able to characterize and

identify herself with whatever music she undertakes. Hearing this record, one can clearly visualize the scene: *Violetta* musing over a feeling that has been strange to her of late, only to impulsively revert to the gayety and abandon of her old life amid admirers and champagne glasses.

Miss Albanese sings the music with warmth and intensity. Her high C is a brilliant effect. The recording seems to be afflicted with a considerable echo as though the voice were surrounded by a vacuum; otherwise it is nicely managed in its balance between voice and orchestra. Whatever shortcomings are here, it is always a pleasure to welcome new records by this very charming artist.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Weber: Der Freischütz—Agathe's Prayer (recit. and aria) (Act II, Scene 2). (Sung in English). Joan Hammond (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Vilem Tausky. 1-12" disc (V-C3510). \$1.90.

As we listened to the first side of this disc we thought that we had a German operatic record sung in English that we could give substantial praise, but when we played the second side our hopes were banished. The English translation got all mixed up with the music and the singer, to say the least, seemed to be in a bit of a flurry. Perhaps this record may be accepted in England but we doubt that it will receive much of a welcome in this country.

PIANO

Etudes. Jakob Gimpel (piano). 4-10" discs in album. Vox Set No. 164. \$4.75.

The contents of this album have been arranged so that when played in automatic sequence, a more logical order is followed. We will list them the way they occur in that order: *Chopin: Etude in F major, Op. 10, No. 8; Mendelssohn: Etude in F major, Op. 104, No. 2; Liszt: Etude de Concert in D flat major (Forest Murmurs); Debussy: Etude pour les Degrés Chromatiques; Debussy: Etude pour les Cinq Doigts d'après M. Czerny; Scriabin: Etude, Op. 65, No. 2; Scriabin: Etude in D flat major, Op. 8, No. 10; Toch: Etude Allegro, Op. 56, No. 10 (The Top); Rachmaninoff: Etude in C minor, Op. 33, No. 2.*

Vox's notes explain why the etude form was developed, which amounts to the idea that a piece which has some interest musically and melodically can also contain technical problems which must be mastered; and that piano practicing is much more pleasant when learning these technical lessons while playing an enjoyable composition. "It is from the repertoire of these so called concert etudes that the contents of the present album has been chosen."

Now there is a good idea for an album, and we believe it is a most successful one. After all, this music is far from the realm of "exercises" and many

of these abstract numbers may have been given other titles (in fact some of them have picked up subtitles and nicknames).

Jakob Gimpel does a thoroughly masterful job with this music. His technique surmounts the difficulties in these etudes and he makes interesting material of them all. The various composers presented offer good contrast and make up a nice program. The piano reproduction is quite acceptable and well balanced and the surfaces fairly good. Whether or not piano students bother with this album, it should be generally popular as a representative piano recital well played. S.

Debussy: Preludes—Book II. Robert Casadesus (piano). 6-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-644. \$5.25.

Here is some of Debussy's most characteristic music for piano performed as it should be. Robert Casadesus is perhaps, above all contemporary pianists, the artist who because of birth, training and psychological influences is best equipped to play this ephemeral, evanescent fare.

Here we have Debussy's *Twelve Preludes* (Second Book) (1910-1913). This set has been generally regarded as more uneven in its merits than the first group. However, among the twelve *vignettes* you will recognize many a piece that you are apt to hear at piano recitals today. The publication of this second group was delayed, for some reason, far longer than had been supposed, and when it finally made its appearance, there were those who compared it critically with Debussy's first set of *Preludes*. Most people thought that while Volume I was superior in creative power and inspiration, Volume II, nevertheless, argued for an advance in general mastery of the medium.

Playing these preludes through at one sitting, one cannot escape a certain tedium and feeling of monotony, for Debussy's strength was also his weakness. The *Puerta del Vino* with its Spanish rhythms, the jauntiness of *General Lavine—eccentric*, and the solid satire of *Hommage a S. Pickwick, Esq.*, with its opening quotation of *God Save the King*, offer some contrast, but not enough. The general impression is that you have been viewing a series of twilight and misty landscapes, vistas more felt than actually seen.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Liszt—arr. Whittemore and Lowe: Liebestraum. One side, and **Paganini-Liszt—arr. Whittemore and Lowe: Variations on Paganini Caprice No. 24.** Arthur Whittemore and Jack Lowe (two pianos). 1-12" disc (V-28-0410). 75¢.

The popular duo-pianists Whittemore and Lowe give these two pieces loving care and their fans will probably be thrilled with their new disc. Recording—excellent.

Chopin: Sonata in B flat minor, Op. 35. Artur Rubinstein (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Victor Set M-1082. \$3.85.

As might have been supposed, Artur Rubinstein's playing of the *Chopin Sonata in B-flat minor, Op. 35*, is an altogether stupendous achievement, for no one today approaches the Polish pianist in the projecting of his great compatriot's more grandiose aspects.

This altogether magnificent recording will undoubtedly become the definitive one, for the set made by Rachmaninoff (V-95) is of the earliest electrical vintage and now definitely outmoded technically, while Kilenyi's interpretation (C-378), admirable as it is in many respects, cannot stand up against the magic of Rubinstein.

Here we find the Polish pianist at his best. His seriousness, his exquisite clarity of tone, his sympathy for this particular sonata, and the majesty and power he brings to it, are all beautifully captured on surfaces which are as smooth as glass, aided by a recording-technique which is probably the last word.
D.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 14 in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight"). Three sides, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 20 in G major, Op. 49, No. 2—Menuetto.** Oscar Levant (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-273. \$2.85.

Lecuona: Malagueña (from Suite "Andalucia") and **Poulenc: Pastourelle.** One side, and **Chopin: Etude No. 5 in G flat, Op. 10, No. 5 ("Black Key")** and **Chopin: Etude No. 12 in C minor, Op. 10, No. 12 ("Revolutionary").** Oscar Levant (piano). 1-12" disc (C-71890D). \$1.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13 ("Pathétique")—Adagio Cantabile. Oscar Levant (piano). 1-10" disc (C-17403D). 75¢.

Columbia continues its numerous releases of familiar classics by Oscar Levant, timed to be on hand while the motion picture in which he plays will be showing around the country. While there is nothing monumental in his rendition of the "Moonlight," in all fairness we must say he does it no malice. There is surely not the stamp of the master virtuoso in the last movement, which is as technically difficult as the first movement is simple. He plays the first movement simply and rather nicely; although the second is too slow and dull. The *Menuetto*, from the Sonata No. 20, is a charming affair and very well performed. The program notes accompanying the album state that the filler is the *Allegretto* from the "Tempest" Sonata; but the record label agrees with the music on the record—the *Menuetto*. The reproduction of the set appeared better than that which we heard in his recent Chopin set.

The Lecuona *Malagueña* is essayed with a fair measure of brilliance and clarity. The Poulenc *Pastourelle* is a worthy addition to the repertoire and nicely performed. The Chopin numbers are from Levant's recent Chopin set (Col. M-649), and the

quality of reproduction and general volume level is noticeably poorer than the Lecuona and Poulenc sides, which are quite good.

We can see no reason for the two-sided ten inch recording of the second movement of the Beethoven "Pathétique Sonata." Levant is least successful in this excerpt, with a mannered reading that offers nothing. Several good complete recordings are now available for those seriously interested in this work.

If Mr. Levant is a bit tired at this time from his recording schedule, we would like to hear from some others on Columbia's distinguished roster of pianists. And we hope they realize how difficult it is to capture really well the tones of a piano.
S.

Debussy: Pour le Piano—Suite (1901). Three sides and **Debussy: Danse (Tarantelle Styrienne).** Gaby Casadesus (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Vox Set No. 617. \$2.85.

French Piano Music. Gaby Casadesus (piano). 4-10" discs in album. Vox set No. 163. \$4.75.

Rameau: Le Rappel des Oiseaux. One side, and **Satie: Troisième Gnossienne.** (VX-16005).

Couperin: Carillon de Cythère. One side, and **Ravel: Prelude and Ravel: Minuet sur le Nom de Haydn.** (VX-16006).

Rameau: Musette en Rondo. One side, and **Chabrier: Idylle.** (VX-16007).

Couperin: Les Barricades Mystérieuses. One side, and **Faure: Deuxième Impromptu (F minor).** (VX-16008).

A pair of albums practically beyond criticism. Gaby Casadesus is an extraordinarily sensitive pianist, and in works of the French school she is at her height. The Debussy Suite is played with a superior sense of style and insight, and without the superficial fussiness that characterizes so much playing of the French school. It is not bold; but it is not brittle. It is impressive playing that assures one of the authority in back of it. The three movements of the Suite are *Prélude*, *Sarabande*, and *Toccata*; this is the first domestic recording (previously a Decca set was available, although poorly reproduced). The album is arranged in automatic sequence; however, each number is complete on a side. The *Danse* was written in 1890 under the title "Tarantelle Styrienne" and reissued in the present piano version in 1903 as *Danse*.

The volume of French Piano Music is subtitled "from Ancient to Modern" and a glance at the order of the music above, will reveal that it has been arranged in automatic sequence, so that the program begins with the older music and finishes with the modern. Again Gaby Casadesus plays with consummate skill. Every side is a gem, and the album is a pleasure to play. Her pedalling in the early music is ever so thoughtful.

The reproduction of both these sets deserves high praise. The piano tone is highly realistic and nicely

balanced. With one or two exceptions, the surfaces are reasonably quiet. We liked everything about this distinguished pair of albums, including the atmospheric cover picture on the Debussy set, and recommend them strongly. S.

Prokofieff: Music for Children, Op. 65. Ray Lev (piano). 3-10" discs in album. Concert Hall Society Set AC. \$4.50.

Prokofieff certainly has a flair for writing music for children. His *Peter and the Wolf* has gained universal celebrity in that field. When we look into his early life, we can see a very valid reason for it. As a child he was writing little operas and producing them for the entertainment of his family. He seems never to have lost touch with music that appeals to the little folk.

The present little pieces date from 1935 and while they are not generally known, they should have a wide appeal to the quite young and those of older years who still have a spark of childhood in their make-up. Several short selections constitute Opus 65 which bears the title *Music for Children*. Some of the titles are: *Morning; Evening; Moonlit Meadows; Rain and the Rainbow; Parade of the Grasshoppers; March, Promenade and Tag; and Waltz and Tarantella*.

The choice of Ray Lev to make the recordings of these lovely little pieces is indeed a very happy one. Miss Lev, although a great artist in the larger works for her instrument, has that simplicity of expression that is needed for an authentic performance of such artistic trifles as these. This album can be highly recommended to those persons who are interested in music of this character. The piano reproduction is excellent. These discs have been pressed on non-breakable Vinylite.

Scriabine: Sonata No. 4, Op. 30. Vladimir Drozdoff (piano). 1-10" disc (PC-10). \$1.

The other day this interesting little disc found its way to the studio. It contains a really very nice performance of this Scriabine piece. Those who are moved by the music of this Russian mystic will probably find the present record of real interest—others will very likely pass it by. The reproduction is satisfactory.

CHORAL



Walton: Where Does the Uttered Music Go? B.B.C. Chorus conducted by Leslie Woodgate. 1-12" disc (V-C-3503). \$1.90.

We learn from *The Gramophone* (London) that this selection was first heard at St. Sepulchre's Church, Holborn, in April, 1946, during a service at which the memorial window to Sir Henry Wood was unveiled. It appears that the great conductor had played the organ there when he was little more than a boy, and that he always had a deep affection for the place.

The poem for which William Walton wrote the music is by the famous English poet John Masefield.

This piece is for chorus unaccompanied and is not the sort of selection that will have a very wide appeal. It would seem that both the poet and the composer took their tasks a bit too seriously, with the result that the work seems to be a bit labored. However, the B.B.C. Chorus gives an example of almost perfect singing and as such this disc is highly recommended.



VOCAL

Schubert: Die Schöne Müllerin, Op. 25—excerpts (Nos. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19). (Sung in German). Richard Crooks (tenor) with piano accompaniments by Frank LaForge. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1067. \$3.85.

Schubert songs by Richard Crooks came rather as a surprise this month. The songs Mr. Crooks offers, with Frank La Forge at the piano, are twelve selected from the great song-cycle *Die schoene Muellerin* (which includes twenty sections in all).

Just when these records were made is problematical. We imagine they may have been recorded several years ago. Whatever their date, they serve to show both Mr. Crooks' virtues and faults as a singer. We find his excellent musicianship, his feeling for line and phrase, but our attention is also drawn to a tone which is so highly placed that it often becomes nasal. Furthermore, Mr. Crooks' diction though uniformly clear, smacks of something indescribably American, particularly his final *r*'s, which have the hardness of middle-western pronunciation.

Wohin und Halt! are finely sung, while *Morgen-gruss* shows the tenor at his very best. The agitation of *Unge-duld* emphasizes the vociferous quality Mr. Crooks employs when attacking the upper register, but *Mit dem Gruenen Lautenbande* emerges as a distinctly pleasant moment in this album. *Der Jaeger* cannot fall into this category, for a nasal tone intrudes too often, and the interpretation is oversimplified. The hard *r* is also very disturbing in this song. The last two songs in the album *Trock'ne Blumen* and *Der Mueller und der Bach* receive much singing that is beautiful.

The reader, by this time, will have gathered from the above comments that Mr. Crooks is uneven. We might add he is also not a singer to plumb the depths; he is pleasantly superficial.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Songs by Charles Trenet. (Sung in French). Charles Trenet (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Wal-Berg. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-647. \$3.75.

For a number of years records by Charles Trenet have been listed in the Columbia catalog and have enjoyed a small sale, largely to those persons who had heard this popular music hall artist in Paris.

Recently Trenet came to New York and the demand for his few records became tremendous. To meet this demand, Columbia now announces this newly recorded set of discs (or should we write disques). It contains many of his biggest hits, including *Mam'zelle Cléo*, *Biguine a bango* and *Quand j'étais petit*.

It is said that Trenet is the Sinatra of Paris. It would seem that that is so, because American bobby-soxers are swooning when he sings, although most of them do not understand a word of his songs. This boy must have something. If you understand colloquial French these amusing songs may be very attractive. They have been splendidly recorded.

"Song of Scheherazade" (Rimsky-Korsakov music adapted by Miklos Rozsa). Charles Kullman (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Julius Burger. 2-10" discs in album. Columbia Set X-272. \$2.25.

The appearance of Charles Kullman's album *Song of Sheherazade* is a lesson and a warning for singers to stick to their own medium and their own world. Worse singing than the Metropolitan tenor does on two of these four record-sides would be hard to imagine. The reason for this is that he is called upon to sing music that is totally unsuited to his voice. The *Hymn to the Sun* from "Le Coq D'Or," for instance, is an intricate series of vocal arabesques designed for the light flexible tones of a coloratura soprano. To hear Mr. Kullman (an artist whom this writer has had many an occasion to admire) floundering around among these embellishments is painful. His closing florid measures of the *Fandango* interpolated from the *Capriccio Espagnol* is another horrible experience. He fares better in the *Song of India* and the insipid *Gypsy Song* which is based on two themes from Rimsky's *Antar* Symphony.

The album is obviously selections from the technicolor Universal picture *Song of Sheherazade*. The notes in the album state with bland candor "Hollywood has taken some license here. . . ." We emphatically agree. The banal texts are by Jack Brooks, the bold arrangements by Miklos Rozsa, the orchestral accompaniments by Julius Burger. Hollywood has apparently filed away for future reference its discovery of Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto and now it pulls poor Rimsky-Korsakov and his music out of the shadows of oblivion. Another West Coast discovery!

Doubtlessly, Mr. Kullman will be more effective in the film than he is on these wax surfaces, for he is a man of charm and talent.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

The Tenor and His Songs. (Sung in German.) Marcel Wittrisch (tenor) with Symphonic Dance Orchestra conducted by Hans Bund. 1-12" (RF-R70035). \$2.50.

The noted German tenor, Marcel Wittrisch, has chosen selections from a number of operettas that

were popular in his homeland before Hitler, and with the aid of a full chorus and orchestra, he presents them in a very attractive manner on this disc. This record is made of nonbreakable Vinylite.

Beethoven: Irish Songs. Richard Dyer-Bennet (tenor) with accompaniments by Ignace Strassfogel (piano), Stefan Frenkel (violin), and Jasha Bernstein ('cello). 3-10" discs in album. Concert Hall Society Set AG. \$4.50.

In 1707, when Scotland joined England in the Union of the Kingdoms of England and Scotland, there was established a "Board of Trustees for the Encouragement of Arts and Manufacturers in Scotland." In 1785, George Thomson became its secretary. He was a cultured gentleman much interested in the folk music of his country. He gathered together a large number of Scottish folk songs to which he added some Welsh and Irish ballads. These he sent to Haydn, asking him to arrange proper accompaniments for them. Haydn supplied accompaniments for the Scotch songs and few of the Irish, but his failing health prevented him from completing his task. Thomson then turned to Beethoven, and after much correspondence, and some quibbling about the fee for the work, the task was accomplished, and the first volume was published in Edinburgh in 1814.

Beethoven took the original melodies and supplied instrumental trio accompaniments with the voice taking the fourth part to make a quartet. Viewing them in that light these little pieces are intensely interesting and worthy of the attention of all Beethoven students, to many of whom these songs doubtless will be entirely new. Concert Hall Society is to be congratulated for making them available for our study and enjoyment.

Richard Dyer-Bennet supplies highly satisfactory renditions and he is ably and artistically supported by his accompanying players. The recordings on nonbreakable Vinylite are very good.

The titles of the songs in this album are: *Once More I Hail Thee*; *The Return to Ulster*; *Oh! Who, My Dear Dermot*; *The Morning Air Plays On My Face*; *The Pulse of an Irishman*; and *Morning a Cruel Turmoiler Is*. The text of each song is printed on the inside covers of the album. R.

Hymns We Love. Nelson Eddy (singing in four-part harmony) with organ accompaniment by Theodore Paxson. 5-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-646. \$4.50.

When Nelson Eddy made these recordings we wonder if Mr. Petrillo insisted upon three other singers standing mutely by while Nelson sang all the four parts. As we recalled, when we reviewed Mr. Eddy's recording of "The Whale Who Wanted to Sing at the Met," it brings back memories of this great singer when he was singing in the churches in Philadelphia and was experimenting with making records on his own home recorder. He made several

male quartet recordings in which he sang all the parts. This was accomplished by his singing the baritone part first and then adding the other three parts by putting the disc back on the recorder three times. It was a very clever stunt and quite remarkable results were obtained. We don't believe that Mr. Eddy ever had any idea of doing such a thing for a commercial company, and having such recordings offered to the vast American public, when he was fooling around with his amateur apparatus these many years ago.

However, here is a whole album of just such recordings. We rather think that the idea, as clever as it is, has been grossly overdone. A record, or possibly two, of the best of these recordings might have been quite acceptable as novelties, but ten sides becomes pretty monotonous. If Mr. Petrillo had three other singers standing by, we wish Mr. Eddy had asked them to join him after the first few recordings.

The choice of hymns for this album is excellent. They are all familiar ones and ones that most Christians have learned to love. They are: *Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart; Sun of My Soul; Onward Christian Soldiers; Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand; Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus; Fling Out the Banner; Now the Day Is Over; Lead Kindly Light; Nearer, My God, to Thee; Hark, Hark, My Soul; Abide With Me; and Rock of Ages.* R.

Finian's Rainbow. Audrey Marsh, Jimmy Carroll, Jimmy Blair, The Deep River Boys, The Guild Choristers, with Russ Case and his orchestra. 4-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set P-167. \$3.75.

It would seem that *Finian's Rainbow* will be a big Broadway success, at least Victor thinks that it will, if we may judge from the publicity that is being given this album. Of course, Victor is first in the field with selections from this new musical production and perhaps it wishes to make the most of its opportunity before competition catches up. While the music does not seem to us to be outstanding in any particular way, it is pleasing to listen to and will probably be of special interest to those persons who have seen the show. The selections are nicely sung by the various artists and they are splendidly supported by Russ Case and his Orchestra.

In this album will be found: *Look to the Rainbow; That Great Come and Get It Day; Old Devil Moon; How Are Things in Glocca Morra; When I'm Not Near the Girl I Love; If This Isn't Love; Something Sort of Grandish; and Necessity.*

Spirituals and Jubilees. Deep River Boys. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set No. 118. \$4.75.

The Deep River Boys are well known for their many broadcasts over CBS and so there is probably a ready market for this album. It contains a group of spirituals and jubilees sung in their inimitable style. We thought the renditions were mighty interesting

and the recording perfect and the surfaces of these Vinylite discs are absolutely noiseless. If such music appeals to you, you need have no hesitancy in selecting this album.

The selections are: *Git Aboard, Little Children; We Are Walking in the Light; Swing Low, Sweet Chariot; Go Down Moses; Oh, Freedom; Honey, Honey, Honey; My Castle on the Nile; and I'm Trampin'.*

Kreisler: Stars in My Eyes (from "The King Steps Out"). One side, and **Kern: The Touch of Your Hand** (from "Roberta"). Eleanor Steber (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Jay Blackton. 1-10" disc (V-10-1248). 75¢.

Miss Steber has chosen two popular songs for this disc which add nothing to her stature as an artist, and in our opinion, very little to the repertoire of recorded music. They are pleasing tunes nicely sung, but they do not require the artistry of a Metropolitan soloist to make satisfactory recordings of them—any competent night club singer would have done just as well.

Abt: Good Night, My Darling Child. One side, and **Zeller: Take Your Time** (from "The Cellar Master"). Karl Schmitt-Walter (baritone) with Chorus and Orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70049). \$2.50.

The Rhine Songs (Potpourri of Rhenish Songs). Karl Schmitt-Walter (baritone) with Orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70042). \$2.50.

The Most Beautiful Songs (Grand Potpourri). Karl Schmitt-Walter (baritone) with Chorus and Orchestra. 1-12" disc (RF-R70043). \$2.50.

(All the above sung in German.)

Karl Schmitt-Walter has a rich baritone voice and his fine diction makes it possible for anyone having a fair knowledge of German to understand the words of these songs. Most of these songs are the type that one might hear at a German songfest and as Mr. Schmitt-Walter is accompanied in many of them with a large chorus, the idea is further carried out.

These records will be of prime interest to those who enjoy good old German songs sung in the traditional manner. The records are all pressed on the new non-breakable Vinylite material.

Robinson: A Walk in the Sun. Earl Robinson accompanying himself on the guitar. 3-10" discs in album. Disc Set No. 623. \$3.

These ballads were written by Millard Lampell and the music composed by Earl Robinson for the Twentieth Century-Fox picture, "A Walk in the Sun." This team of Lampell and Robinson produced "The Lonesome Train," which was so well received when a recording of it was made available by Decca some time ago. "A Walk in the Sun" is in a similar vein and those who enjoyed that recording will very likely find this one of prime interest.

An attractive illustrated booklet giving the words

of the ballads that make up "A Walk in the Sun" is included with this album. Splendid recording is a feature of this set of discs.

Rodgers: *Carousel*—Soliloquy. Frank Sinatra (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Axel Stordahl. 1-12" disc (C-7492M). \$1.

Last summer RCA Victor issued a recording of this unusual selection from the Broadway hit *Carousel* by James Melton and it has enjoyed a reasonable sale. And now Frank Sinatra offers his version. The selection does not require a great voice—it requires someone to sing it with feeling and make the text abundantly clear, for the song tells a story. The hero of *Carousel* contemplates what his unborn son will be like and during his contemplation suddenly realizes that his son may be a daughter. We see little choice between the earlier recording by Melton and the present one. Both men do very well, and the recording in both cases is highly satisfactory.

CHILDREN



Raggedy Ann's Sunny Songs. Sung by Frank Luther, with accompaniments by Harry Breuer (chimes and vibraharp) and Jesse Crawford (organ). 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-494. \$3.

These charming little songs, always in the best of taste, and so pleasingly sung by the children's favorite, Frank Luther, will certainly delight the hearts of the little ones. They have been very nicely recorded.

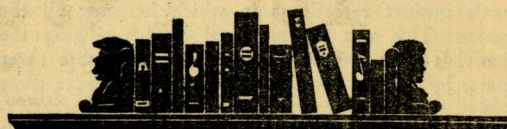
DICTION



Shakespeare: Hamlet—Six Excerpts. Maurice Evans (as Hamlet and the Ghost), assisted by Emmett Rogers; with incidental music conducted by William Brooks. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-651. \$3.85.

Students and lovers of Shakespeare will surely welcome this excellent album containing six selected readings from *Hamlet* by the distinguished English actor Maurice Evans. None will quarrel with his interpretations we are certain, and the appropriate and unobtrusive musical background of original music by Roger Adams adds to the joy of these readings.

The excerpts included in this album are: "O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt,"; Ghost Scene (Act I, Scene 5); "O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!"; "To be, or not to be,"; Hamlet's Advice to the Players; and "How all occasions do inform against me."



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

A Treasury of Grand Opera. Edited by Henry W. Simon. v+403 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

The Borzoi Book of Ballets. By Grace Robert. xvii+362+xxiii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.50.

Listening to the Orchestra. By Kitty Barne. 299 pp. Illustrated. The Bobbs-Merrill Company (Indianapolis). Price \$2.75.

A Treasury of Stephen Foster. Foreword by Deems Taylor. Historical Notes by John Tasker Howard. Arrangements by Ray Lev and Dorothy Berliner Commins. Illustrated by William Sharp. 222 pp. Random House (New York). Price \$3.95.

Talking Wax. By Leroy Hughbanks. 142 pp. The Hobson Book Press (New York). Price \$2.50.

Modern Music. By Max Graf. Translated by Beatrice R. Maier. 320 pp. Philosophical Library (New York). Price \$3.

Two Worlds of Music. By Berta Geissmar. 327 pp. Creative Age Press, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.

Theme and Variations. An autobiography by Bruno Walter. Translated from the German by James A. Galston. Illustrated. xi+344+xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Bibletone, BO—Bost, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musierart, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

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WITH this issue, the fourteenth volume of THE NEW RECORDS is completed and we find the interest in recorded music steadily increasing. At the moment we believe that more persons are interested in recordings than at any previous time. During the war the folks at home kept up an ever increasing demand for records, and since the return to civilian life of thousands of record collectors, the sale of recordings has increased tremendously. Numerous new companies have been formed for the publishing of records, and fields that have not been adequately covered are now receiving attention. In our pages we have attempted to bring the most important of these to the notice of our readers. We are very sure that no publication has reviewed more recordings in the classical and semi-classical field than THE NEW RECORDS. Those who have read it regularly may feel that they are quite well-informed in the realm of recorded music.

During the last year we have received for review many imported recordings, and it would seem that we will receive a greater number during the coming twelve months. We will do our best to see that these receive prompt attention. It is a feature that most of our readers enjoy. It is possible to find reviews of many of the domestic recordings in the columns of the metropolitan newspapers but seldom do any imported discs receive notice there.

This great interest in recorded music is reflected in our subscription list. We have more subscribers today than at any time during our fourteen years of publication. Our readers are in no way limited to those persons who purchase records from us. As a matter of fact, we do not believe that twenty per cent of our subscribers are customers.

Anyone is welcome to subscribe by simply sending in the small subscription fee (50 cents per year).

A great many subscriptions end with this issue—if yours does, please return the enclosed blank promptly in order that you may not miss any issues. If you have already renewed your subscription, or if it does not end with this issue, please disregard the renewal blank enclosed.

* * *

More and more persons are continually using recordings in the study of a foreign language. Crown Publishers (New York) have just issued two new sets—one for the study of French and the other for Spanish. These are called "Living French" and "Living Spanish." Each set consists of forty lessons on twenty 10-inch discs. Two books—a Conversational Manual and a Common Usage Dictionary—are supplied with each course. The records are contained in two albums, and the albums and the two books are housed in a substantial fibre case. The price of each set is \$29.50 plus tax of \$1.48 for a total price of \$30.98 (postpaid within U. S. A.).

The Living Language Courses were prepared and edited by a staff of language experts headed by Ralph Weiman, who, as Chief of the Language Section of the U. S. War Department, developed the Living Language Method that proved so preeminently successful in teaching thousands of American service men and women to speak French and Spanish.

We have gone over these courses very carefully and we have found that they have been very intelligently prepared. It would seem to us that they would be particularly valuable to young persons who have not been out of school long enough to have forgotten how to

study. Anyone who has had a year or two of the language in high school should breeze through the course with ease and should be able to speak it with reasonable fluency in a short time. The Living Language Courses are not as painless or as simple as the Linguaphone Courses, nor are they as expensive. The Linguaphone Courses are \$52.50 each (tax included). However, they should bring just as good results, and in probably less time, provided that the student has the ability to take the knowledge he receives from the records and the books and use it in speaking the language he is studying. Under the Linguaphone Method, the student, after listening to the records over and over again, just begins to speak the language without much effort on his part, while under the Living Language Method he must make the effort to use the knowledge he has received in developing his ability to speak the language. In other words, if you are a good scholar, the Living Language Course is more suited for your use, if you are not, or if it has been a long time since you have done any studying, you will find the Linguaphone Course much more satisfactory.

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BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues from Vol. I, No. 1 (March, 1933) are available. The price is 5c each or 50c a dozen. A file of all of the available issues (at least 135 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE. All prices quoted in THE NEW RECORDS are list prices *exclusive* of excise tax. In ordering please add 5 per cent to list prices quoted.

ORCHESTRA



Strauss: Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24. The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-613. \$3.85.

Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra, continuing their policy of supplying all the old chestnuts of the symphonic repertoire, this month

come forward with a recording of Richard Strauss' *Tod und Verklärung*. This is an excellent run-of-the-mill performance. It is nothing out of the ordinary, nothing that is going to make an audience speak of memorable moments, but it is sound, solid, well directed Richard Strauss. Ormandy, though lacking any great spark, has, nevertheless, a sound grasp and knowledge of this music.

The album runs into competition with the three sets that Stokowski has made between 1934 and 1945—the one with the Philadelphia Orchestra; the one for Columbia with the All-American group, and the later version with the City Center forces. Personally, we still prefer (and this includes the album under review), Stokowski's original set with the Philadelphia Orchestra (VM-217).

Surfaces in this present Ormandy set are very bad. There was a constant crackling which was profoundly disturbing in the quieter portions of the tone-poem. D.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90 ("Italian"). National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Heinz Unger. Seven sides, and **Mendelssohn: The War March of the Priests.** The London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 4-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-1. \$9.

Schubert: Symphony No. 8 in B minor ("Unfinished"). National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-14. \$7.

Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet (Overture-Fantasia). Five sides, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: The Snow Maiden**—Dance of the Tumblers. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Albert Coates. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-6. \$7.

This trio of albums of symphonic staples continues the English Decca releases of frrr recordings being made available by Decca in this country. The best of the lot is the Schubert "Unfinished" Symphony which Fistoulari does mighty well. We have not yet found out very much about this fellow Fistoulari, but from the several EDA sets we have recently heard he seems to be an outstanding conductor. The reproduction of this set is marvelous and the surfaces like glass. We believe this to be the best "Unfinished" available at this time.

Mendelssohn's gay "Italian" Symphony receives a most deliberate treatment in the first movement by Dr. Unger. For us it is just too slow. It does not lack rhythm and incisiveness, but it has not the dash and sparkle that Koussevitzky or Beecham give it. The last three movements are quite good. Surprisingly enough, *The War March of the Priests* comes off beautifully, with just the right balance of pomp and brilliance. The reproduction and surfaces are A-1.

Albert Coates' reading of the *Romeo and Juliet* is a highly dramatic and supercharged affair that

wrings, kneads, and squeezes the last drop of passion out of the score. If you like this sort of thing you will revel in his overwrought conception. The reproduction is the last word in full range clarity; however, the final full orchestra chords (at the end of side five) are muddy and rattle, due, no doubt, to the excessively heavy tympany roll.

Again we remind our readers that these English Decca sets will not perform on all automatic changers, as explained last month in the review of *Pétrouchka*. S.

Mozart: Symphony No. 38 in D, K. 504 ("Prague"). St. Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1085. \$3.85.

We do not detract from the admirable accomplishments of Golschmann in this album when we say that this release is entirely uncalled for. Bruno Walter and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra made a splendid recording of this work (VM-457) which RCA Victor could keep in its catalog with pride. It is a rather echoey job, although hardly more so than some of Victor's latest domestic accomplishments; but it is a shining example of the unique resiliency, smoothness, and deftness of the old Vienna Philharmonic's playing, which in some ways seems never to have been duplicated by any other orchestra.

Golschmann's reading of the *Prague* is in every way a fine piece of work; it stands up well with Walter's and in our opinion receives no competition from Beecham or Stock. Stock's estimation of the *Prague* (CM-410) is too spineless; while Beecham (CM-509) is entirely too deliberate and fussy in this instance, in addition to which he suffers dull reproduction. Golschmann, therefore, comes out on top; except for those sentimental souls who cherish the Vienna recordings, among which we number ourselves.

The outstanding characteristic of this symphony is its form; it being in three movements only, the minuet omitted. It is one of the loveliest of the Mozart symphonies, and deserves a place in every collection. The reproduction is quite good, as are the surfaces. S.

Stravinsky: Firebird Suite. Seven sides, and **Stravinsky: Fireworks, Op. 4** (Fantasy for Orchestra). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-653. \$4.85.

This recording represents the third orchestral suite which Stravinsky has drawn from his *Firebird* ballet. It is an augmented version which restores the *Adagio* and *Scherzo* sections eliminated in the second suite. The *Adagio* and *Scherzo* appear here as sections two and three. This new version uses a conventional orchestra, as did the second suite; the first suite was scored for an unusually large

orchestra.

A majority of record reviewers have disapproved Stokowski's readings of the *Firebird Suite* (VM-291 with Philadelphia Orchestra and CM-446 with All-American Orchestra). But the Stokowski-Philadelphia set has always been to us one of Stokowski's most impressive works, and the recorded tone to this day is thrilling. Comparing it to the present set, we do not feel inclined to replace it with the newer augmented version. It is futile to argue that Stravinsky provides a more authentic reading—if anyone should conduct the *Firebird* with authenticity, surely its composer should. But Stravinsky, as a conductor of his own or anyone else's works is definitely no match for Stokowski when it comes to color, and drawing color from a hundred musicians. Victor Set M-291 is still tops for magical sounds and entrancing music, whether or not "Stokey" remains within the letter of the score. We might also mention that concert, radio, and recording performances offer some leeway for interpretation in ballet music that a ballet performance cannot accommodate.

The present set is quite well reproduced; surfaces on our set were good. While our affection for the Stokowski *Firebird* cannot be shaken, we appreciate the values of this new album. The two new sections, the forthright performance by the composer, and clear recording recommend it to anyone planning to add *Firebird* to his collection. The last side filler, *Fireworks*, is an early work that makes a most acceptable encore. S.

Delibes: Sylvia—Ballet Music. The BBC Theatre Orchestra conducted by Stanford Robinson. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-5. \$5.

Gounod: Faust—Ballet Music. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-11. \$5.

Tchaikovsky: The Swan Lake, Op. 20a—Orchestral Suite. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sidney Beer. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-12. \$5.

These three sets should provide many happy hours for lovers of ballet music. They are all very good performances and full range reproductions. The BBC Theatre Orchestra conducted by Robinson provides the proper light touch to light music with good taste prevailing throughout. The familiar *Sylvia* pizzicato is there, and Delibes' flair for ballet music reminds us again how charming this type of music can be.

Fistoulari seems to have a broader conception of the *Faust Ballet Music* than some conductors, and his interpretation is conceived on a larger scale. The music is not stodgy, for Phryne's Dance has plenty of snap and bite. We liked his evaluation of the score—this Fistoulari is a very convincing conductor.

Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake Ballet* has always

seemed to us one of his less ingratiating scores. It is pleasing enough when danced, but as music alone is not as enjoyable as his other ballets. Sidney Beer does a competent job if a not too inspired one, and he ends his suite with a pale *Scene* which does not bring the work to a very dynamic conclusion. Some of the domestic versions of this work are preferable. S.

Berlioz: Le Carnaval Romain—Overture, Op. 9. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Victor de Sabata. 1-12" disc (D-K1552). \$2.

Thomas: Mignon—Overture. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (D-K1166). \$2.

Here is a fine pair of discs. Both of these overtures get sterling treatment and receive splendid reproduction, with silky surfaces, of course. *The Roman Carnival* is brilliantly conducted by de Sabata, a well-known Italian conductor. The final passages of this overture are always thrilling and he unleashes the brass section to good effect in the final flashy bars. If you have the Boston "Pops" recording of *The Roman Carnival*, compare this one with it for reproduction and get a big surprise—there is that much difference. We even feel a slight preference for this one over the new Koussevitzky record.

The *Mignon Overture* is light fare which Fistoulari does nicely. The harp solo at the beginning is captured with amazing fidelity. A number of older recordings have been made of this bon-bon, but a new one is not out of place. There is really much pleasure to be had from some of these lighter works, as witness the great and deserved popularity of the radio program by the Longines Symphonette. They deal largely with music of this type. To have such distinguished recordings as English Decca provides of these works is a service to a large number of record collectors. S.

Grieg: Holberg Suite, Op. 40. Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolph Ganz; commentary by Deems Taylor. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set DA-301. \$4.75.

Haydn: Symphony No. 45 in F sharp minor ("Farewell"). Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf; commentary by Deems Taylor. 4-10" discs in album. Pilotone Set DA-302. \$4.75.

These albums are remarkable in several ways. In the first place, they contain as fine reproduction of a symphony orchestra as we have ever heard—perhaps the finest. The surfaces of these discs are absolutely silent; they lack the crackle that is present on some Vinylite discs. Pilotone has been more successful in the use of this new record material than any other manufacturer that we know of. Both selections chosen for these albums are interesting and have been beautifully performed under competent leadership. It is reported that numerous

dealers are using these recordings to demonstrate new phonograph combinations. The public seems to recognize their excellence at once and is duly impressed with the superb reproduction and the quiet surfaces.

And now for their shortcomings—in the first place they are 10-inch discs. Most persons prefer selections that require several sides recorded on 12-inch records so that there will be just as few breaks as possible. In the second place, as these discs are arranged in automatic sequence, and Mr. Taylor's remarks take two record sides, it is necessary for the player to reject the first two sides unless he wishes to hear the commentary over and over again every time he plays the set. If Mr. Taylor's remarks had been placed on two sides of the first disc that record then could be laid aside unless someone particularly wished to hear it. Also, in that case, it should be optional with the buyer as to whether he wished the explanatory disc included in the album or omitted.

We have given these two albums the space we have because we think they are worthy of it, and we hope Pilotone will act favorably on our suggestions. If they do, we shall certainly receive some outstanding recordings from this company, and ones that should enjoy phenomenal sales. R.

Copland: Lincoln Portrait. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky, with Melvyn Douglas (speaking). Three sides, and **Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.** Melvyn Douglas (speaking). 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1088. \$2.85.

Last summer Columbia issued a very fine recording of this work by the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York under the direction of Artur Rodzinski with the Negro actor Kenneth Spencer as the narrator, and we can see no logical reason for another recorded version. Certainly the present recording is no better than the previous one, in fact, we personally do not like it quite as well. We rather feel that Mr. Spencer gives an authentic touch that is missing in Melvyn Douglas. While *A Lincoln Portrait* is interesting in its way, it is not of sufficient importance from an artistic point of view to warrant the expense and effort required to have it recorded by two of the world's leading orchestras.

For a detailed account of this work, see D's review of it in the August 1946 issue of THE NEW RECORDS.

Bernstein: Fancy Free—Galop, Waltz, and Danzon. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-11-9386).

These selections from Leonard Bernstein's ballet *Fancy Free* are given grand performances by the Boston "Pops" under the spirited direction of Arthur Fiedler. They have been splendidly recorded.

Wagner: Die Meistersinger—Prelude. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (V-11-9385). \$1.

As every record collector knows there have been numerous recordings made of this famous prelude down through the years. Many of the world's most famous conductors have directed recorded versions of it including: Karl Muck, Stokowski, Bodanzky, Beecham, Reiner, Walter, Stock and several others. And now Toscanini offers his recording. There is a wide choice; music lovers may make their own selection. The present version has been most faithful recorded.

Music of Richard Rodgers. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-655. \$4.85.

Mr. Kostelanetz presents these popular Richard Rodgers' tunes as he feels they should be played. Those who agree with him will think they are just too, too grand, others will not be so enthusiastic. We always rather feel that when Kostelanetz goes to work on a popular tune he turns it away from the composer toward Kostelanetz. Some folks like this and some folks don't.

The selections included in this album are: *My Heart Stood Still*; *The Most Beautiful Girl in the World*; *It Might As Well Be Spring*; *Blue Moon*; *Johnny One Note*; *If I Love You*; *Where and When*; *The Girl Friend*; *There's a Small Hotel*; *Lover*; and *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue*.

Purcell—trans. Stokowski: *Trumpet Prelude*. One side, and **Haydn**—trans. Stokowski: *Eighteenth Century Dance* (from the Quartet in F, Op. 3, No. 5). Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-12" disc (V-11-9419). \$1.

These two Stokowski transcriptions of works of masters of another age make mighty pleasant listening and they have been beautifully recorded. Stokowski made a recording of the *Eighteenth Century Dance* with the Philadelphia Orchestra many years ago but it is not presently available. The Hollywood Bowl players sound very well in these lovely selections and we rather feel that this disc will enjoy wide popularity.

Gypsy Nights. Jascha Datsko and his Gypsy Ensemble. 4-10" discs in album. Capitol Set CD-42. \$3.75.

There always seems to be room for another album of Gypsy music, and the present is worthy of a place with the best of them. Jascha Datsko is a violinist of rare ability in his field, and he leads his ensemble to new heights in interpreting these fascinating melodies. Among the selections in this album are the ever-popular *Song of the Plains* (Meadowland) and *Two Guitars*. The reproduction is excellent.

Familiar Waltzes from Favorite Operas. Cincinnati Summer Opera Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-491. \$2.75.

This little album contains a number of familiar waltzes nicely played by the Cincinnati Summer Opera Orchestra under the direction of Fausto Cleva. At times the violins seem a bit shrill, otherwise the recording is quite satisfactory.

The selections contained in this album are: *Juliet's Waltz Song* from "Romeo and Juliet"; *Peasant Waltz* from "Mefistofele"; *Parisian Waltz* from "La Traviata"; *Elite Waltz* from "Fedora"; *Waltz* from "Faust"; and *Doll Waltz* from "Tales of Hoffman."

Moussorgsky—arr. Rimsky-Korsakov: *A Night on Bald Mountain*. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc. (C-12470D). \$1.

The older version of this selection by the Philadelphia Orchestra directed by Stokowski has enjoyed immense popularity for years, and we can well imagine that those persons who have it in their libraries will not wish to replace it with the Reiner recording. We doubt if we will. However, if you don't have a copy of *A Night on Bald Mountain* in your collection, we suggest that you hear both versions before making your selection.

Wagner: Siegfried—Forest Murmurs (Act II). Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-12" disc (V-11-9418). \$1.

Many persons may prefer the present version of this selection to the older one by the Pittsburgh Symphony directed by Fritz Reiner but we will still stick to the Reiner recording. It is one of our favorites. Both recordings should be available for your selection, and so we suggest that you hear each of them before making your choice.

Tchaikovsky: Eugen Onegin—Waltz (Act II) and Polonaise (Act III). London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (V-11-9421). \$1.

The recording of these two popular Tchaikovsky selections was released in England just about a year ago and is reported to have had a large sale. It is a pleasing record—the music is tuneful and the performance under the able direction of Sir Thomas is very fine. A good orchestral disc that anyone may enjoy.

Tchaikovsky: Marche Slave, Op. 31. Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-12" disc (V-11-9388). \$1.

Numerous recordings of this old war horse are available and so we can see no particular reason for another. However, Stokowski gives it the works. It is a good loud recording and if your amplifying system will take it without blasting you have a good phonograph.

Johann Strauss Waltzes for Dancing. Harry Horlick and his Orchestra. 5-10" discs in album. Decca Set A-426. \$4.50.

Decca is re-issuing these records this month with new record numbers and in an attractive new album. All the most popular Strauss waltzes are here, including *Emperor Waltz*; *Tales From the Vienna Woods*; *Southern Roses*; *Wine, Woman and Song*; and *Artist's Life*. There are ten selections in all. If you would like to have these famous waltzes in strict dance time, here they are, splendidly played and well recorded.

CONCERTO



Khachaturian: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra. William Kapell (piano) with the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1084. \$4.85.

After the enthusiastic and warm welcome accorded the Khachaturian *Concerto* last month, we now have the difficult task of comparison with this new release. Last month THE NEW RECORDS heaped generous praise on the English Decca frr recording by Moura Lympany and the London Symphony Orchestra. After comparing these two versions of the Khachaturian *Concerto* we would still be lavish in praise of Miss Lympany's performance. But there is no denying the large scale, brilliant effect of Kapell's rendition, any more than we can deny the equal enjoyment of hearing two different conductors perform a familiar symphony—each in his own fashion.

The entire conception of the Decca and Victor versions seems to us to be different. Koussevitzky has a broader picture of the work, and employs long ritards, orchestral playing with a bite and snorting brass. Fistoulari, in the Decca set, has refined the orchestra score somewhat, although it is certainly not tame or uninteresting in his hands. Between the pianists, it is give and take. Miss Lympany entirely eclipses Kapell in the final flash of double octaves at the close of the first movement (to which we referred last month). Yet Kapell provides moments which surpass Miss Lympany's impression of the work. In the long run, Kapell emerges with a more striking and glittering exposition of the concerto. If that is the way you like it, his recording will have stronger appeal.

Also more brilliant, glittering, and downright clanky is Victor's reproduction. About sixty per cent of the bass appears to have been filtered out, while the upper registers are highly strident. Naturally, some portions of the work are flattered by this clear, ringing quality; but it gets rather monotonous after a few hearings. Considering that most persons still, for some reason, adjust their tone controls to lessen the treble and increase the bass, this type of reproduction may not annoy them. We

must admit it is extremely clear and transparent recording, if not in the best balance.

Considering the difference in price, there is little doubt that the Victor set is the better buy, especially since English Deccas do not perform perfectly on all record changers. If you have the opportunity to compare these two sets, your time will be well spent. S.

Brahms: Concerto No. 1 in D minor, Op. 15.

Rudolf Serkin (piano) with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 6-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-652. \$6.85.

Brahms' *Piano Concerto No. 1* has been performed somewhat frequently during the past season or two by several top-flight pianists and has consequently created a mild demand for this odd concerto. The fact that Brahms wrote it cannot raise any exceptional enthusiasm in us for this pretentious and labored work. The unwieldy opening theme gets us off to a wrong start, and we never seem to wholly warm up to the thing.

There have been two previous recordings in the Victor catalog by Backhaus and Schnabel. Schnabel's being later it is a better reproduction, but Backhaus had equally as much or more to say in his estimation of the score. The present performance by Serkin is a worthy effort that sets forth the music fairly and encompasses the technical difficulties more adroitly than even Schnabel. Backhaus is a good match for Serkin in matters of interpretation. The rock of strength in this new set is Fritz Reiner, who does far better than either Schnabel's or Backhaus' accompanists (Szell and Boult respectively). Reiner gets the symphonic character of the orchestral score across very well without submerging the piano.

Columbia has not completely captured the full glories of a concert grand piano, although the orchestra reproduction is quite faithful. The surfaces on our set were mixed, one gritty, one swishy, several a bit noisy, and several fairly quiet, resulting in a below par average. Taken as a whole, the set is a reasonable investment for those who have an irresistible yearning for this work, and it fills a gap in Columbia's admirable catalog. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord (C major, K. 296; B flat major, K. 378; and G major, K. 379). Alexander Schneider (violin) and Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichord). 6-12" discs in album. Columbia Set M-650. \$6.85.

Unquestionably one of the finest albums we have ever heard. This album came to us as somewhat of a surprise, for we did not expect to hear such remarkable teamwork as well as such individual mastery. These two men play together as nearly

perfectly as can be imagined. Schneider is a violinist of the first order, and he handles his Mozart with dash and brilliance, poetry in the sustained slow movement and all of it framed in a thoroughly appropriate and musicianly style. Anyone who has any affection for violin music cannot help being thrilled with this album. To us it was far more refreshing than hearing a virtuoso performance of one of the oft-played concertos. Mozart is always a most palatable dish for us; yet there is something commanding about these violin and harpsichord records that seems so new and interesting. The harpsichord is infinitely more colorful than a piano for sonata work and Kirkpatrick provides a splendid exposition of these scores.

Mozart being an accomplished performer on both the violin and the harpsichord, he turned out some thirty-five sonatas for this combination. The three presented here are a good choice for they contrast well, are more mature Mozart, and are individually full of interesting aspects, such as the theme and variations in the finale of the *G major Sonata*.

The Columbia debut of this distinguished sonata team is indeed a joyous occasion which we hope they will soon follow up with another similar feast. S.

Haydn: Quartet No. 30 in G minor, Op. 74, No. 3 ("The Horseman"). Budapest String Quartet. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set X-274. \$2.85.

This quartet would seem to be an ideal one for anyone to acquire who wishes to begin exploring the quartets of the masters. Comfortably occupying but four record sides, it is barely twelve minutes long; but it is a perfectly proportioned, four movement quartet. The title "Horseman" is a nickname it picked up somewhere from the unusual figure which occurs in the last movement. It seems to suggest a man on horseback, and the work has borne the subtitle "Reiter" or "Rider" or "Horseman." The first movement is a brief *Allegro*; the second movement a somewhat longer and charming *Largo assai*; while the third movement is a crisp Menuetto (*allegretto*). The last movement is *Allegro con brio*—the horseman gallops along at a smart pace.

The rendition by the famous Budapest Quartet is typically superlative and Columbia has reproduced it nicely with reasonably quiet surfaces. This is the first domestic recording of the "Horseman" and is the only recording available except for the one in the Haydn Society (Vol. II). It is also the first Haydn quartet which the Budapest group has recorded for Columbia. Their series for Columbia is easily the greatest contribution to domestic chamber music recording of our day; and a few more Haydn quartets will help balance their list. The present set is a fine choice for the embryonic chamber music collector and a "must" for the seasoned wayfarer of the art. S.

CHORAL



Haydn. The Seasons. (Sung in Italian.) Gabriella Gatti (soprano), Francesco Albanese (tenor), Luciano Neroni (bass) with Chorus and Orchestra of E.I.A.R. conducted by Vittorio Gui. 10-12" discs, with libretto and albums (manual sequence only) (Cetra SS-1009 to SS-1018). \$30.90.

It seems odd that Cetra—an Italian recording company generally concerned with opera of the Mascagni and Puccini type—should have been the instrument to bring forth the first nearly complete recording of Haydn's oratorio *The Seasons*. Here you will find this delectable music presented with some traditional and minor cuts on twenty excellent surfaces.

Listening to this set of *The Seasons* was like a serene and lovely excursion into the country. Haydn was here concerned with some of the basic features of existence—the change of season, fields, woods, flowers, storms, love, the praise of God, and a communal good time. All is mirrored and reflected with the most wholesome naturalness by this towering master. As we look further we find a storm, a hunting party, a harvest, a vintage and a preoccupation with agriculture in general.

The opening Spring chorus, *Ah vieni, O Flora* sets the mood for the entire work. This is followed by what is probably the best known single number from *The Seasons*, *Allegro va l'agricoltor*.

Cetra has done well by this great score. There are many who might wonder what an orchestra, a chorus, a conductor and soloists generally preoccupied with works of the Italian operatic repertory might do with music so stylistically different. They may allay their fears. The style is restrained, joyous and naive—just what it should be. The conductor, Vittorio Gui, does a magnificent job. One has only to listen carefully to the orchestra prelude, *L'Inverno* (Winter), to be thoroughly convinced of this. Signor Gui has evidently imbued his chorus and his soloists with the proper spirit. Here are none of the super-heated emotional outbursts, proper to the operatic stage. The balance between the fine orchestra and the singers is everything one could wish for. The chorus, especially in the gay and ebullient, *La fischiano i pifferi*, and the contrapuntal finale is first-class.

Of the soloists, Gabriella Gatti, the soprano, has the greatest amount to sing. One was struck with the similarity of this voice to Rosa Ponselle's, especially when that supreme singer was at the beginning of her career. Miss Gatti has a liquid, velvety voice, whose tones contain hardly a ripple. She also sings most charmingly, and her long solo, *O cara foresta* (during the *Summer* section of the oratorio) is a lovely piece of work. The Neapolitan tenor, Francesco Albanese, is also an admirable

choice. His lyric tenor is smooth and glowing, and, in this music, admirably employed. Luciano Neroni, a basso, who has appeared in previous Cetra sets (*Lucia* and *Turandot*) sings *Allegro va l'agricoltor* and other portions of the score with restraint and musicianship, and, above all, a fine sense of style.

An admirable libretto with notes on Haydn, the oratorio and the forces employed comes with the set. It will also afford you a fine chance to brush up on your Italian.

There is no minimizing the importance of this beautifully contrived release. It is an effort that one looks upon with gratitude and respect.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

OPERA



Donizetti: L'Elisir D'Amore—Una furtiva lagrima (Act II). One side, and **Verdi: Rigoletto**—Parmi veder le lagrime (Act II). Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25058). \$3.09.

Massenet: Manon—Il Sogno (Act II). One side, and **Thomas: Mignon**—Addio, Mignon (Act II). Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25119). \$3.09.

Puccini: Tosca—O dolci mani (Act III). One side, and **Rossini: Il Barbiere di Siviglia**—Ecco ridente in cielo (Act I). Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) with E.I.A.R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (Cetra BB-25181). \$3.09.

All the above sung in Italian.

Three-pocket Tagliavini souvenir album to hold the above records available \$1.

Ferruccio Tagliavini's first album was such an outstanding success, when it was first released last October, that this, his second album has naturally stirred up unusually fervid interest. Furthermore, since that initial release, Signor Tagliavini has effected his debut with the Metropolitan in "*La Boheme*," and has become the focal-point of much praise and publicity.

This second volume of arias only strengthens one's first opinion: that here is a young man with a lovely (perhaps not great tenor voice), who knows the art of singing thoroughly and can therefore indulge in many of the refinements and nuances others today avoid with studied care.

However, this second volume came rather as a disappointment to this reviewer, for some of Mr. Tagliavini's faults seem also more emphasized than they were in that first exciting album. Chief of these is a sobby quality (modeled on Beniamino Gigli) that intrudes itself where the text does not

warrant such an effect. Now, there are places where emotion carried to the point of sobbing is justifiable. We have seen our he-man idols on the screen in tearful scenes, and there is no reason why an operatic tenor cannot do the same at the end of *E lucevan le stelle* from *Tosca*; in the *Ridi, Pagliaccio* aria, or in the finale of *La Boheme*—to name some instances. But there is no reason for *Nemorino* to sob during *Una furtiva lagrima*, unless he be a congenital cry-baby, and even less reason for *Wilhelm Meister* to cry when he is urging *Mignon*:—*Adieu Mignon, courage, ne pleure pas!* (*Good-bye Mignon, take courage and do not cry*). Signor Tagliavini is guilty of ill-judged sobs in both these otherwise beautifully sung arias.

The best record of the new set is *O dolci mani* from *Tosca*, which is perfectly sung; the *Dream* from *Manon* is also very artistically accomplished, though one prefers a French tenor (Clement, for instance) in this music.

Signor Tagliavini is not quite on pitch in the *Elisir d'Amore* aria, that is in one or two moments, nor are his scales in the *cavatina* from the *Barber of Seville* as fluid as those of such past masters as de Lucia, McCormack and Schipa.

However, you are likely to find, despite faults of style and emotional exaggerations, much to admire afresh in this splendid young singer, who seems to have brought a renewed interest to Italian operatic roles in this country.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Puccini: Manon Lescaut—In quelle trine morbide (Act II). One side, and **Rossini: William Tell**—Selva opaca (Act II). (Sung in Italian.) Rosa Ponselle (soprano) with orchestra. (Re-recorded from 1922/23 disc.) 1-10" disc (CRS-15). \$2.

It seems only yesterday that Rosa Ponselle was singing at the Metropolitan. And yet, here we have this so recently retired singer offered on a ten-inch record as an historical item!

The Collectors Record Shop has cleverly dubbed two of Miss Ponselle's early Columbia records on an exceedingly well reproduced disc, almost noiseless in surface.

Miss Ponselle's voice, at the time of these recordings (1923 and 1924), was at its most glowing and opulent. It is indeed a pleasure to hear the glorious, velvety tones of this supreme voice so beautifully reproduced.

The *William Tell* aria is especially interesting because Miss Ponselle was the Matilde of the 1923 revival, when on January 5th of that year, the opera was given for the first time in 29 years at the Metropolitan.

Miss Ponselle never appeared in Puccini's operas, but her enthusiasm for Farrar in *Butterfly* and Bori in *Boheme* was no secret, and she was at least able to gratify this ambition of singing a Puccini heroine

(she was too statuesque and big-voiced for these roles) on records. D.

Leoncavallo: I Pagliacci—Vesti la giubba (Act I).

One side, and **Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana—Addio alla madre.** (Sung in Italian.) Jussi Bjoerling (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Nils Grevillius. 1-12" disc (V-11-9387). \$1.

Jussi Bjoerling sings these familiar arias in his usual robust fashion. The reproduction is nothing to boast about. On the *Addio alla madre* side of the sample disc sent us there was a defect probably caused by a bad stamper. Watch for this if you are interested in this record.

Giordano: Andrea Chenier—Nemico della Patria (Act III). One side, and **Meyerbeer: L'Africana—Adamastor, re dell' onde profonde (Act III).** (Sung in Italian.) Robert Merrill (baritone) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-11-9384). \$1.

Robert Merrill gives fine performances of both of these arias and those many music lovers who are always looking for new operatic recordings will find this disc very much to their liking. It has been well recorded.

VIOLONCELLO



Chopin: Introduction and Polonaise Brillante in C major, Op. 3. Gregor Piatigorsky (violin-cello) and Valentin Pavlovsky (piano). 1-12" disc (C-71889D). \$1.

Single violoncello records are seldom issued and so when one comes along of such high quality as the present one it is quite an occasion. Chopin gives both the 'cellist and the pianist ample opportunity to display their virtuosity and the artists on this disc certainly take advantage of it. We seem to remember a recording of this work by Feuermann and Rupp for RCA Victor, but we doubt if it is still available.

PIANO



Chopin: Mazurka No. 48 in A minor, Op. 68, No. 2 and Chopin: Waltz in E minor, No. 14 (Op. Posth.). One side, and **Daquin: Le Coucou and De Severac: Musical Box.** Solomon (piano). 1-12" disc (V-C-3509). \$1.90.

Haydn: Sonata in D major. Solomon (piano). 1-12" disc (V-C-3494). \$1.90.

When any new recordings by Solomon are made available in this country they usually cause quite a stir and we see no reason why this pair of discs should be any exception. The Haydn *Sonata in D major* should be of particular interest for so few of his keyboard sonatas are available on records.

Solomon seems to have an affinity for this music and gives a performance that should suit even the most critical. The short Chopin pieces are well-known and Solomon's flair for that composer is firmly established. The novelties by Daquin and Severac add a bit of spice that is quite refreshing. All in all these discs contain a short Solomon recital that his many admirers on this side of the Atlantic are bound to enjoy. The reproduction is of the best and the English record surfaces are as smooth as glass.

Gershwin: Prelude No. 2. One side, and **Milhaud: Saudades do Brasil—Ipanema (V), Sumaré (IX), Laranjeiras (XI).** Artur Rubinstein (piano). 1-12" disc (V-11-9420). \$1.

Darius Milhaud dedicated his Brazilian Dances, which date from 1921, to Artur Rubinstein and that famous pianist has chosen three of them for one side of the present disc. The second of three preludes by George Gershwin occupies the reverse side. There is nothing particularly exciting about this record but those who are interested in the music that it contains will find that it has been skillfully played and faithfully recorded.

VOCAL



Italian Art Songs. (Sung in Italian.) Giuseppe De Luca (baritone) with piano accompaniments by Pietro Cimara. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set V-1. \$7.

Giordani: Caro Mio Ben and Falconieri: Bella Fanciulla. One side, and **Pergolesi: Siciliana.** (DV-90003).

Dolce Madonna (Anon.) and Caldara: Selve Amiche. One side, and **Lotti: Pur Dicesti.** (DV-90004).

Pasquini: Recitativo ed Aria. One side, and **Caccini: Amarilli.** (DV-90005).

There is something very reassuring about Giuseppe De Luca's new records being reproduced on unbreakable Vinylite, for it gives the art of this remarkable veteran a sense of permanence.

This album is the astounding proof that a man of 69 (Mr. De Luca was born in Rome on Christmas Day, 1876), if properly schooled in the foundations of the *bel-canto* art, can still sing beautifully.

Eight 17th and 18th Century Italian songs are found between these covers. There is nothing more vocally exposed or more demanding of control than songs of this kind, and the great baritone conclusively demonstrates that, despite his years, he is able to offer these melodies in a manner which is practically a lost art.

The diction is wonderful. It is unexaggerated and forms a part of the vocal line, but every syllable is clearly heard and perfectly rounded. The singer's style, his use of head-voice, his phrasing

and breath-control are the acme of this type of vocalism.

It would be idle to claim that Mr. De Luca's voice is as large, as firm, as youthfully vigorous as it was during his long period as principal Italian baritone of the Metropolitan, nevertheless, the few concessions to age, that are here and there apparent, should in no way interfere with your enjoyment, if you are a true lover of thoroughly artistic singing.

When one thinks of Mr. De Luca's contemporaries in the baritone field it is indeed an extraordinary position he is enjoying at present. Scotti and Amato are dead. Ruffo and Stracciari have long since stopped singing; so has Danise. But De Luca is still packing them into Town Hall and enjoying an occasional triumph in opera. His *Rigoletto* here in Philadelphia last May proved that he can still thoroughly manage a role which holds terrors and vocal pit-falls for men in their prime. When you listen to this beautifully presented album of Decca, you will see why all this is still possible.

Pietro Cimaro, one of the Metropolitan's present conductors, is eloquent and sympathetic at the piano. The records are very clear and lifelike; surfaces, for the most part, excellent.

The inside cover of the album depicts the great singer in various phases of his career, and there is, thrown in for good measure, an excellent booklet with material on both the songs and their composers.

Bravo Decca! for bringing back one of the finest singers and one of the most beloved figures of the American operatic scene!

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Britten: Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo. (Sung in Italian.) Peter Pears (tenor) with piano accompaniments by Benjamin Britten. 1-10" disc (V-B-9302) and 1-12" disc (V-C-3312). \$3.25.

Consciousness of Benjamin Britten as an outstanding musical personality and interest in his work have been greatly increased since his opera, *Peter Grimes*, was presented in the Tanglewood Theater at Lenox, Mass., last August before capacity audiences.

Here we have this talented Englishman's *Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo*, a suite of songs that should arouse considerable curiosity. This is not easy music to listen to, especially when one does not have access to the texts or to any good translations. The idiom is thoroughly modern, and yet Mr. Britten shows an understanding of the voice and a feeling for long flowing melodic line that is most unusual in a composer of the day. Most songs, that is the art-songs, of our current composers sound like well written piano compositions with vocal interjections. This criticism could never be leveled at Mr. Britten's *Seven Sonnets*, which are not only

often melodious, but in which the voice has been considered first. Curiously enough, though the composer is of pure Anglo-Saxon background, he has managed to make his music fall without fail on the right accents of the Italian texts. These, it is almost superfluous to add, are Michelangelo's original words.

Michelangelo addressed his sonnets to Tommaso dei Cavalieri and to Vittoria Colonna. His admiration for the splendid cavalier was at its height during 1533 and 1534, while his "grave and serene friendship" with the great lady began in 1535. Both these attachments provoked a series of beautiful poems.

It is quite remarkable how Britten has captured the spirit, one might almost say the flavor, of the Renaissance. His sympathy with the period and its grandiose yet fastidious mode of expression is ever present in his musical phrase.

Peter Pears, who created the *Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo* in England during the autumn of 1942, with the composer present at the piano, has been very properly selected to again introduce them to phonograph audiences. Mr. Pears has a sweet, high, pale voice which he employs with much taste and skill. His type of vocalism seems singularly well suited to this refined music. His diction is not as clear as John McCormack's was, for instance, and sometimes one wishes for a little more bite in the enunciation of these passionate texts. However, on the whole, this is an admirable performance, which obviously must have had the approval of the composer, whom we find here very efficiently present at the piano.

Surfaces and recording might well give pause to some of our leading American recording companies.

It might be truthfully added that this music grows on you the more you hear it.

MAX de SCHAUENSEE.

Bach Arias. (Sung in German.) Marian Anderson (contralto) with RCA Victor Chamber Orchestra conducted by Robert Shaw. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1087. \$3.85.

V-11-9378. *Kreuz und Krone* (Cantata No. 12).

One side, and *Jesus schläft, was soll ich hoffen* (Cantata No. 81).

V-11-9379. *Zum reinen Wasser er mich weist* (Cantata No. 112). One side, and *Bereite dich, Zion* (Christmas Oratorio).

V-11-9380. *Erbarme dich, mein Gott* (Passion According to St. Matthew).

With all due respect to the immortal Johann Sebastian Bach and the distinguished Marian Anderson, after playing through this album of excerpts from cantatas, one receives the impression of overwhelming monotony. In all fairness to the great Johann Sebastian, he surely never meant anyone to sit down and play five of his contralto arias in quick succession.

All this music is rather of the same color, in a minor mood. It has been obviously prepared with great care, for not only has RCA Victor enlisted Miss Anderson, who, at her best, is a superb Bach singer, but there is also present a group here called the Victor Chamber Orchestra, under the sensitive direction of Robert Shaw. There are two instrumental soloists, Robert Bloom, who performs on both the oboe and the oboe d'amore, and Joseph Fuchs, violinist. All these various elements are well co-ordinated and have been fused with care and sympathy for the projection of this great music.

The aria *Kreuz und Krone* from Cantata No. 12, and the *Jesus schläft, was soll ich hoffen* from Cantata No. 81, are beautiful but utterly melancholy in mood. Miss Anderson's tones are here somewhat fluttery and plaintive, though there is no gainsaying her seriousness, her reverence for the music. The *Zum reinen Wasser er mich weist* from Cantata No. 112, and *Bereite dich, Zion* from the Cantata, *Sing Ye!* (Christmas Oratorio, Part I) are less mournful, and Miss Anderson takes advantage of their crisper rhythms. Robert Bloom's obbligato with the oboe d'amore, in the first of these, is delightful.

But it is in the final record—the magnificent *Erbarme dich, mein Gott!* from *The Passion According to St. Matthew*—that Miss Anderson and the accompanying forces come really into their own. Here we find the singer in her most superb vein, the recording ranking with her very best. The music is here of a sustained beauty and majesty that is not attained in other portions of this album. Joseph Fuchs' violin obbligato ideally complements Miss Anderson's silvery tones.

It might be a happy thought if RCA Victor issued this final excerpt separately. The recording and the care with which this set has been achieved is indeed worthy of respect.

MAX de SCHAUSENSEE.

Folk Songs and Ballads. Sung by Susan Reed with zither or Irish harp. 3-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set M-1086. \$3.

A great tide of interest in American folk songs is sweeping the country from coast to coast. The better magazines are carrying leading articles on the subject, and the demand for recordings in this field is beyond anything the record manufacturers have ever experienced before. Burl Ives, Richard Dyer-Bennet, Josh White, John Jacob Niles and other artists, who have devoted so much of their time and energy to the development of the appreciation of this type of music, are now reaping their just reward. Susan Reed, a young girl from South Carolina, who has been singing these ballads as long as she can remember, came to New York recently and by chance was given the opportunity to appear at the famous night club, Cafe Society (uptown

and downtown). She proved to be an immediate hit, which proves that even night club audiences are caught in the great tide that is sweeping America.

It is our opinion that Susan Reed will convert more persons to a love of American folk songs than any other artist we can think of. She has such a pleasing voice and her style is so fascinating that anyone who likes music at all is bound to be attracted by her singing. The lilt of her voice catches one's ear and he is enjoying the simple little ballad she is singing before he knows what it is, and when he finds out, he is bound to want to know more about these ditties. We are very enthusiastic about Susan's first RCA Victor album and do not hesitate to recommend it to all of our readers.

It contains: *Venezuela; Go Away from My Window; Molly Malone; If I Had a Ribbon Bow; The Old Woman; Barbara Allen; A Mighty Ship; Jennie Jenkins; My Love Is Like a Red, Red Rose; and The Soldier and the Lady.* R.

Elgar: Sea Pictures, Op. 37. Five sides, and Haydn: **Hark What I Tell to Thee.** Gladys Ripley (contralto) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. 3-12" discs (V-C-3498 to V-C-3500) in album. (Also available in automatic sequence. V-C-7638 to V-C-7640). \$5.70.

Elgar's song-cycle *Sea Pictures* was written for Dame Clara Butt and was introduced to the public by that great artist at the Norwich Festival in 1899. She apparently had real affection for the work for she repeated it many times in future concerts. Miss Ripley isn't Clara Butt, but she is a very fair substitute, and we found her performance on the present discs most acceptable. We rather believe that those music lovers who are interested in this work will have nothing but praise for this recording. The soloist has the benefit of fine orchestral support under the direction of George Weldon.

The cycle consists of the following five selections: *Sea Slumber Song; In Haven; Sabbath Morning at Sea; Where Corals Lie; and The Swimmer.* Miss Ripley gives nice variety to her renditions and seems always to catch the mood of the different selections. We were particularly impressed with the reverent and sympathetic manner in which she sang the very beautiful *Sabbath Morning at Sea*. Miss Ripley's renditions of *Sea Slumber Song* and *In Haven*, for both of which Lady Elgar supplied the words, are worthy of special mention. Considering it as a whole, we might say that the recording of *Sea Pictures* is a great artistic success, and worthy of substantial praise.

The second side of the third record contains a magnificent recording of Haydn's lovely and impressive but seldom heard song *Hark What I Tell to Thee.*

The reproduction has been faithfully accomplished, and the silent English record surfaces add to the attractiveness of this excellent set of discs.
R.

Irish Songs. Eileen Farrell (soprano) with the Columbia Concert Orchestra conducted by Charles Lichter. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set M-662. \$3.75.

C-4360M. Moore: *Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms*. One side, and *The Minstrel Boy* (trad.)

C-4361M. *The Last Rose of Summer* (trad.) One side, and Molloy: *The Kerry Dance*.

C-4362M. Claribel: *Come Back to Erin*. One side, and Falconer-Balfie: *Killarney*.

C-4363M. Weatherly: *Danny Boy*. One side, and Glover—arr. St. Clair: *The Rose of Tralee*.

To people who tune in frequently on the radio there is no news in the statement that Eileen Farrell has one of the loveliest voices of the day.

Miss Farrell has selected for her bow with Columbia, eight representative Irish songs, which she has made in conjunction with sensible, well-considered accompaniments by Charles Lichter. The arrangements are blessedly free from all obnoxious frills and misguided so-called stream-linings.

Miss Farrell's voice is so warm and beautiful and she sings with such taste and artistry, that investigation of this attractive little album is well worth your while—that is, if you really care about fine singing. All one has to do is to listen to the soprano's *Last Rose of Summer*, to be instantly convinced that this is no ordinary singer.

The selections have been made with taste and discrimination. There is no hint of cheapness, and the songs here presented typify a certain kind of Irish music at its best.

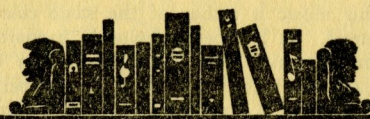
It is to be hoped that with this brilliant start, Columbia will exploit Miss Farrell's warm, rich tones to the limit. We, for one, would like to hear her in a variety of music, including operatic arias.
D.

VIOLIN



Hubay: Hejre Kati (Hungarian Czardas Scenes, Op. 32, No. 4). One side, and Balakireff: *Oh, Come to Me*. Mischa Elman (violin) with piano accompaniments by Leopold Mittman. 1-12" disc (V-11-9423). \$1.

Two pleasing violin selections nicely played by Mischa Elman and well recorded by RCA Victor. The Balakireff piece was dedicated to Mr. Elman.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

A Treasury of Grand Opera. Edited by Henry W. Simon. v+403 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

The Borzoi Book of Ballets. By Grace Robert. xvii+362+xxiii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$4.50.

Listening to the Orchestra. By Kitty Barne. 299 pp. Illustrated. The Bobbs-Merrill Company (Indianapolis). Price \$2.75.

A Treasury of Stephen Foster. Foreword by Deems Taylor. Historical Notes by John Tasker Howard. Arrangements by Ray Lev and Dorothy Berliner Commins. Illustrated by William Sharp. 222 pp. Random House (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Record Book (Complete Edition. Reprint). By David Hall. xvii+1063 pp. The Citadel Press (New York). Price \$2.98.

Modern Music. By Max Graf. Translated by Beatrice R. Maier. 320 pp. Philosophical Library (New York). Price \$3.

Two Worlds of Music. By Berta Geissmar. 327 pp. Creative Age Press, Inc. (New York). Price \$3.

Theme and Variations. An autobiography by Bruno Walter. Translated from the German by James A. Galston. Illustrated. xi+344+xx pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All of the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U. S. A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer. A—Asch, B—Brunswick, BL—Biblestone, BD—Best, C—Columbia, CA—Co-Art, CE—Cetra, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CPS—Contemporary Poets Series, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, CT—Concertone, CU—Columbia University Book Store, D—Decca, DI—Disc, FRM—Friends of Recorded Music, G—General, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, GT—Gamut, HU—Harvard Film Service, IRCC—International Record Collectors' Club, KN—Keynote Recordings, MW—Hargail, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, NMR—New Music Recordings, O—Odeon, OK—Okeh, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunken, S—Sonora, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TA—Tone Art, TE—Technichord, TM—Timely, V—Victor, and VX—Vox.